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HISTORY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH BIBLE.

H. P. CAMERON, M.A.





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HISTORY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH BIBLE;

BY  
HENRY P. CAMERON, M.A.,

*AUTHOR OF*  
"TEXT BOOK FOR COMMUNICANTS,"  
AND  
TRANSLATOR OF "IMMENSEE."

~~~~~  
"Ἀσέβους μὲν ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπου τὰς παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ  
χαρίτας ἀτιμάζειν."

ALEXANDER GARDNER,  
LONDON: 12 PATERNOSTER ROW; AND PAISLEY.

1885.  
1055<sup>1885</sup>. f. 2  
~~1057~~



I. T.

FLOSCULO TENERO CAROQUE

PRÆMATURE

SED

IN REBUS TRISTISSIMIS

BENEVOLE

LAUS DEO SIT

CARPTO

ET

IN COELUM

UBI IN AETERNUM FLOREBIT

TRANSLATO

HOC OPUSCULUM

AD CURAM EXPELLENDAM

SCRIPTUM

A PATRE

DEDICATUM EST.





## PREFATORY NOTE.

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THE story of our English Bible is very interesting. It is interwoven with the history of the nation, and the writer of the following pages has endeavoured to relate it as concisely as possible. The recent publication of the Revised Version gives a new turn and adds a fresh interest to that story, and is a fitting opportunity for the appearance of such a work as this. The author is deeply conscious of his indebtedness to the labours of others, and he herewith tenders them his most grateful thanks. None need attempt to explore the vast field of research without the assistance of such pioneers as Westcott and Eadie. As their masterly productions, however, are beyond the reach of the ordinary reader, this book is published with the view of supplying a felt want, and in the hope that it may induce many not only to study the subject for themselves, but, above all, to reverently read, study the Word of God, and make that Word their own.

H. P. C.

*August, 1885.*

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# HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### INTRODUCTION.

MYSTERY shrouds the introduction of Christianity into Britain. There cannot, however, be any possible doubt but that the light of the Gospel reached our shores before the end of the first century of our era. As God often seizes natural events to work out spiritual purposes, the invasion of Cæsar (55 B.C.) may have been designed by Him as a means of propagating the knowledge of His Son Jesus. The Kingdom of God indeed came "without observation;" for when, where, and how it was first announced remains a secret which history has not disclosed. The tradition that Joseph of Arimathea, the Apostles Peter and Paul, preached the Gospel here has been rejected as an idle tale, and the most that can be averred on the subject of the first planting of Christianity among our ancestors is, that during the first century some of the con-

verted soldiers who served in the ranks of the Roman armies, or some of the converted natives who came in their train from the Imperial City, may have brought hither the glorious news of the Revelation of God to man.

During the second century the knowledge of the true faith had spread abroad. France possessed then numerous Christian congregations, and Tertullian expressly affirms, that "even those places in Britain hitherto inaccessible to the Roman arms have been subdued by the Gospel of Christ," so that in his time (160-220 A.D.) Christianity must have penetrated further than the Imperial arms, and probably reached Scotland.

The conversion of Constantine the Great facilitated the progress of Christianity, and strengthened the position of the British Church, which had already gained a considerable hold upon the people. Constantine succeeded his father at York, as Emperor of the West in 306, and shortly afterwards embraced the Christian faith by seeing, it is said, in the sky a luminous cross with the inscription *en touto nika*—BY THIS CONQUER.

It is also an historical fact that several Bishops from Britain, whose tenets were opposed to the Romish Church, attended the early Councils of Western Christendom.\*

Although the Scriptures, either in whole or in part, were widely circulated among the early Christians, no Celtic fragments of any old

\* As at Arles, in France, 314 A.D.; Nice, 325; Sardus, 347; Ariminum, 359.

version have come down to us. It is recorded† that many copies of the Bible were burned in the streets of British towns during the Diocletian persecution.

Where Rome was dominant the Church used a Latin Version, which would be understood by the more educated classes. This was the ancient Version called *Vetus Itala*, on which was based Jerome's translation, commonly known as the *Vulgate* (329-420 A.D.).

But, however flourishing the state of Christianity might have been under Roman supremacy, it was destined to suffer an eclipse, nay, an almost utter extinction, by the arrival of the pagan Saxons. The period when the Germanic tribes burst upon the Roman Empire; when "clouds upon clouds successively rose in the sky, till the congregated host, gathering fresh terror as it rolled along, obscured the sun of Italy, and sunk the western world in night," was peculiarly disastrous to the British Church, by forcing the Romans to leave the island.

The Saxons completed the desolation which had been previously commenced by the numerous and successful inroads of the wild Caledonians—the Picts and Scots. They either almost exterminated the original inhabitants, or drove them into the western parts of the island. The Christian Churches were demolished, and their clergy murdered, and it was not till 570 A.D. that the first rays of Gospel truth were shed upon the Saxon conquerors of Britain by means of the marriage of King Ethelbert, of Kent, with

† Gildas.



the Christian Princess Bertha, daughter of Caribert, King of France.

But the immediate cause of the introduction of Christianity into the realm was a casual incident which occurred at Rome.

As Gregory the Great, a good and upright man, was passing one day through the streets in Rome, he saw in the market-place some youths exposed for sale as slaves. They had been brought from the remote island of Britain. Gregory inquired whether the inhabitants were heathens or Christians. "They are still in heathen darkness," was the reply. The pious monk rejoined, "Alas that the Prince of Darkness should have such fine countenances in his dominion, and that such noble features should be estranged from the everlasting grace of God! What is the name of their people?" "They are called the Angli," was the answer. "Indeed," he exclaimed, "they have angelic faces, and it is a thousand pities that they are not partakers of the glory that shall be revealed before the angels of God. What is the name of their province?" "Deira," it was answered. "Yes, indeed, he said, "De irâ; from the wrath of God they must be rescued, and called to the grace of Christ. What is the name of their king?" "Ella," they said. "Oh that he may soon sing Allelujah!" exclaimed Gregory, with great emotion. From that moment he felt a strong desire to Christianise the Saxons in Britain, and he never lost sight of his object. He actually set out upon the dangerous mission, but the Pope commanded his return. After his acces-

sion to the Pontificate, Gregory selected Augustine, a distinguished monk, and sent him with forty companions to preach the Gospel in this island. There were many delays and misgivings upon the road, the missionaries being alarmed by the reports they heard of the ferocity of the Anglo-Saxons; but Gregory exhorted them to persevere in their purpose, and procured them all the assistance he could in France. On their arrival in the year 597, King Ethelbert, already well-disposed towards the Christian faith, assigned them a place of abode in the Isle of Thanet, and soon after admitted Augustine to a conference, which was conducted in the open air, the King apprehending, it is alleged, sorcery under a roof. Encouraged by his favourable reception, Augustine redoubled his zeal, not only to convert the people but to subject them to the authority of the Pope. Multitudes were baptised, and the King himself soon followed their example. Gregory was so overjoyed that he conferred the Primacy of the whole island upon Canterbury, the capital of Kent, and sent the pall, a badge of ecclesiastical honour, to Augustine, who had already been consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury, by the Prelate of Arles. His attempts to reduce the Welsh Christians to Papal subjugation failed, and although Gregory sent him additional help, the conversion of the whole island was not completed till many years after the death of Augustine, whose mortal remains lie buried in the churchyard of the monastery in Canterbury, which bears his name.

While England was being reclaimed, Scotland and Ireland were not neglected. God raised up in these countries also earnest and noble missionaries who proclaimed to their fellow-men the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Of St. Ninian little is known except that he converted the Roman Britons of Valentia, now known as the Lowlands of Scotland, and founded the monastery of Whithorn, in Wigtonshire. He died about the year 432 A.D.

St. Serf at Culross and Lochleven, and St. Palladius at Fordoun, in Kincardineshire, laboured among the Picts in the middle of the fifth century.

The Strathclyde Britons were Christianised by St. Kentigern, who is said to have been the son of a British Prince and Princess. He was born about the year 514, it is believed at Culross on the Forth, and entered the monastery there at an early age. He was such a favourite with his brethren that his name Kentigern, signifying "chief lord," was exchanged for the more endearing appellation of Mungo, signifying "lovable" or "dear friend." Leaving Culross he founded a monastery at a place then called Cathures, now known as Glasgow, and became the Bishop of the kingdom of Cumbria. Driven from Scotland on the accession of a new King, he found refuge in Wales, and there, upon the banks of another Clyde, planted another monastery and Bishopric, which still bears the name of his disciple, St. Asaph. Recalled to Glasgow by King Ryddereck the Bountiful, with whom he stood on intimate

terms, Kentigern renewed his labours. It is said that St. Columba paid him a visit. He died in 601, and sleeps beneath the noble Cathedral there.

St. Patrick or Succat, the anniversary of whose death is observed by nearly all Irishmen at home and abroad by wearing the "dear little shamrock," was born at Kilpatrick, near Glasgow, of respectable parents, and after labouring in Ireland for some sixty years, he closed his earthly career at the patriarchal age of 120, on the 17th March, A.D., 492, at Downpatrick, about twenty miles from Belfast, where his remains are said to have been interred. The Book of Armagh, written in the beginning of the ninth century, contains a copy of his Confession, which is admitted to be genuine by critics of all parties. When about sixteen years of age, in 388, he was carried captive by pirates or barbarians into Ireland, where he was forced to spend six years of his life as a shepherd's boy, in the service of Milcho, a petty King in the north of Ireland. He escaped, made his way to Tours in France, where his mother's uncle, St. Martin, was Bishop, was again captured, but his second captivity was of brief duration. It is said that he remained four years with St. Martin, who made him a monk. In the early days of his adversity, which in some natures is the period when the thoughts return to what is right and change the current of our after lives, he gave his life to God. Some time after his second captivity he had a remarkable dream, of which till his death he retained a

vivid recollection. He describes it thus: "I saw in a vision of the night a man whose name was Victoricius coming as if from Ireland with innumerable letters, one of which he handed to me, and I read the beginning of the letter, which ran thus—'The voice of the people of Ireland,' and while I was reading aloud the beginning of the letter I thought at that moment I heard the voice of those who were near the wood of Focluth, which is by the western sea, and they cried out thus—'We entreat thee, holy youth, to come and walk still among us,' and I was much pricked to the heart, and could read no more, and so awoke." He regarded this dream as an intimation from heaven that he must become a missionary to Ireland, and thus set out for the country where he was to spend the remainder of his days. He travelled north, south, east, and west; visited, reasoned, preached, taught, and was beloved by the people. Multitudes were brought under the influence of the truth, and he is to this day known as the "Apostle of Ireland." He had not only a strong mind, but also a robust constitution, for he says, "I used to remain in the woods and the mountains praying before daylight in the midst of snow, ice, and rain, and I felt no injury from it, nor was there any sloth in me."

The glorious hymn which he is said to have prepared for Tara, where he went to effect the conversion of Laoghaire, the chief monarch of the country, gives noble utterance to his sentiments, and is well worth preservation—

"I bind to myself to-day  
The power of God to guide me,  
The might of God to uphold me,  
The wisdom of God to teach me,  
The eye of God to watch over me,  
The ear of God to hear me,  
The word of God to give me speech,  
The hand of God to protect me,  
The way of God to be before me,  
The shield of God to shelter me,  
The host of God to defend me  
Against the snare of demons,  
Against the temptations of vices,  
Against the lusts of nature,  
Against the incantations of false prophets,  
Against the black law of heathenism,  
Against the false law of heresy,  
Against the deceit of idolatry,  
Against the knowledge which bends the soul of man.  
Christ be in the heart of each person to whom I speak,  
Christ be in the mouth of each person who speaks to me,  
Christ in each eye which sees me,  
Christ in each ear which hears me."

This hymn exhibits the faith of the primitive Church of Ireland. No vicar reigns; Christ alone in the hearts of the people.

St. Columba was born at Gartan, a village in the county of Donegal, towards the close of the year 521, A.D. He was of royal descent, and had worldly honour been his ambition, might easily have worn a crown. But he was actuated by other than selfish motives, and his desire was to be reckoned worthy to labour for Christ, and to meet with His approbation. His early education was entrusted to a pious presbyter called Cruithnechan, who had also baptised him; and thus, as we learn from Adamnan, his biographer, "from his boyhood Columba had

been brought up in Christian training; in the study of wisdom, and by the grace of God had so preserved the integrity of his body and the purity of soul that, though dwelling on earth, he appeared to live like the saints in heaven." Next to the Bible, his chief study was the Confession of St. Patrick, which partakes more of the character of an autobiography than of a theological treatise, and relates in vivid language the Lord's dealings with him and the work he had been enabled to do in the "Isle of Saints." The government of the Irish Church, as founded by St. Patrick, was somewhat peculiar. It was congregational rather than diocesan, *i.e.*, the Bishops exercised their authority over the clans or families instead of supervising the spiritual affairs of a wide district or province. There were many such congregational Bishops in Ireland. Wherever a church was planted, a Bishop was set over it. Besides these congregational Bishops, however, there were others. Dr. Todd states that "every man of eminence for piety or learning was advanced to the order of a Bishop, as a sort of degree or mark of distinction. Many of them lived as solitaries or in monasteries. Many of them established schools for the practice of the religious life and the cultivation of sacred learning, having no diocese or fixed episcopal duties." These Bishops lived, as a rule, in groups of seven, and no fewer than 153 are said to be invoked in the Irish Litany of Angus the Culdee, a work written probably in the ninth century. This form of Church government soon became effete, and the religious life

of the nation concentrated itself in monasteries, whence issued missionaries, who first gave themselves to God as a living sacrifice, and afterwards sought to teach others the blessed truths of the Gospel. Columba studied at various monasteries, and made great proficiency in the art of music as well as in his severer tasks. Some say he was a poet. The teacher who influenced him most was Finnian, the Abbot of Clonard—no better model, for it is recorded of him that “he was in his habits and life like unto the Apostle Paul.” Columba was much esteemed both for his natural abilities and his personal character, and, doubtless, his high social position was a source of strength to him when preaching to the poor, for people are too prone, especially in this mercantile and mercenary age, to regard the ministry as a mere profession; but no such base motives could be attributed to Columba, seeing he had set aside for the sake of the Gospel the alluring prospect of filling a throne. While prosecuting his studies Columba was ordained first a deacon and afterwards a presbyter, and at the age of twenty-five he founded the monastery of ‘Derry in 546. As the head of a monastery he became an Abbot, and everyone who joined his monastery vowed obedience to him and loyalty to their common Master. He bore the same relation to his monks as a Highland chieftain does to his clansman: he was their head, and had full sovereignty over them. Several monasteries were founded about this time, but the principal was the monastery of



Durrow, which is mentioned by the Venerable Bede, "the Lamp of the Western Church." Columba's influence was now rapidly increasing, but he seems to have somehow got mixed up with the feuds that were constantly occurring between the different tribes, for tradition says that he was connected with a battle which was fought at a place called Cooldrevny in 561, and it was "probably at the instance of the sovereign who was worsted at that battle" that he was excommunicated by a Synod of the Irish clergy convened at Feltown. Adamnan says the charge against him was "pardonable and very trifling," and "indeed unjust," but history does not record the nature of that charge. On account of the unhappy circumstance, Columba resolved to quit his native country, and to do for Scotland what St. Patrick had done for Ireland—to preach and to teach, or in the words of the *Old Irish Life*, "he had determined to go across the sea to preach the Word of God to the men of Alba." With the aid of twelve companions he constructed a coracle of osiers and skins. In this rude bark they embarked, and as it ploughed the deep, Columba expresses in pathetic language his longing after Erin—

"Large is the tear of my soft grey eye  
When I look back upon Erin."

Onward the little band sailed till they landed on the Isle Hy or Iona, and here they raised a cairn in memory of the great purpose for which they had left the country they loved so well. Conal, the Scottish King, received them hos-

pitably, and handed over Iona to Columba, and it became "The Missionary Isle," "The Light of the Western World." Near the north end of the island they founded their monastery which was only, as the custom then was, a wattled building, or creel-house, unlike the grand solitary piles of the Middle Ages. Here Columba laboured assiduously, heroically raising the standard of Christ and refusing to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome. "One alone is your head—Jesus Christ." "It is better to keep the heart pure than to abstain from meats." Such was the principle of Columba's teaching, embodied in three golden rules, which he laid down for the guidance of his disciples: (1) The consecration of common life to Christ; (2) The cultivation of personal holiness; (3) The extension of His Kingdom in the world. Iona was a great nursery for missionaries. Spoteswoode says that in Columba's own life-time he founded 100 monasteries and 365 Churches, and ordained 3000 monks. But his noble work was done. On Saturday, the 9th of June, 597, after a stroll with his faithful servant Diormit, and taking a farewell view of the familiar spot, he blessed the monastery in these memorable and prophetic words:—"Unto this place, albeit so small and poor, great homage shall yet be paid, not only by the Kings and people of the Scots, but by the rulers of barbarous and distant nations, with their people also. In great veneration too shall it be held by the holy men of other Churches." In the evening he attended service in the Church, and thereafter retired to

his chamber, and, to quote the words of Adamnan, spent the remainder of the night on his bed, where he had a bare flag for his couch and for his pillow a stone. When reclining there his last instructions to his friends were—"These, O my children, are the last words I address you, that ye be at peace and have unfeigned charity among yourselves." At midnight the bell tolled, he ran hastily to the Church, and before the altar knelt and prayed. No words were heard. Diormit lifted him up, and supported his head upon his bosom; the monks came rushing in, but their master, with a sweet smile radiating his countenance, had peacefully entered into the life eternal.

"The life that shines beyond our broken lamps,  
The lifeless, timeless bliss."





## CHAPTER II.

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### ANGLO-SAXON VERSIONS.

By Anglo-Saxon is meant the language spoken by the Germanic tribes—the Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes—who established themselves in this country about 450 A.D. Their tongue forms the staple of our own, and the early translations into it merit our attention.

The earliest attempt at a Saxon translation of the Scriptures is ascribed to Cædmon, a monk of Whitby, towards the close of the seventh century, and in the time of St. Hilda. The work, however, is rather a diffuse poetic paraphrase than an accurate version. It has been thus described by a modern author:—

“The inequality of the different parts of the poem attributed to Cædmon was first noticed by Conybeare. A fine poem on the Fall of the Angels, the Creation, and the Fall of Man, is awkwardly prefaced by a narration of the same story much more briefly told. Then we have a barren version of the chapters of Genesis to the close of the life of Abraham, except the accounts of the Flood, and of the wars of the Kings against Sodom, which are told in a superior style. Suddenly, without any connection with that of Abraham, we are introduced

to the history of Moses, which again is told in a very different manner, and has all the marks of being a separate poem. After the history of Moses follows that of Nebuchadnezzar, equally distinct and complete in itself, which occupies all the remainder of the first part. The second part comprises chiefly a poem on the descent of Christ into Hades, a favourite story, known in somewhat later times as the 'Harrowing of Hell.'

Cædmon, we may add, was originally a cow-herd. Bede tells the story of his inspiration. It was the custom in those days for each to sing in turn as the harp was handed round the hall at supper. This Cædmon could never do, and when he saw his turn coming, he used to slip out of the room, blushing for his want of skill. One night, having left the hall, he lay down to sleep in the stable, and, as he slept, he dreamed that a stranger came to him and said, "Cædmon, sing me something." "I know nothing to sing," said the poor herd, "and so I had to slink out of the hall." "Nay," said the stranger, "but thou hast something to sing." "What must I sing?" "Sing the Creation," replied the stranger, upon which words began to flow from lips that had been sealed so long.

The following extract may serve to show that the work is not destitute of poetic force—it sometimes rises to Miltonic grandeur:—"Then the Chief began the powerful King to tempt, earnestly proved what the man's fortitude were: with words austere, he with his

voice addressed him—‘Go thou, with utmost haste, Abraham, journeying set thy steps, and with thee lead thine own child. Thou shalt Isaac to me sacrifice, thy son, thyself as an offering, after thou mountest the steep downs (the ring of the high land which I from hence will show thee) up with thine own feet; there thou shalt prepare a pile, a bale-fire for thy child, and thyself sacrifice thy son, with the sword’s edge, and then with swart flame burn the beloved’s body, and offer it to me as a gift.’ He delayed not the journey, but soon began to hasten for the way. To him was the Lord of Angels’ words terrific, and his Sovereign dear. Then the blessed Abraham his night’s rest gave up, the Preserver’s behest despised not, but him the holy man, girded with a grey sword, showed, that of the Guardian of Spirits, dread in his breast dwelt.”

About the same time Guthlac, or Gurthlake, the first Saxon anchorite, at Croyland, near Peterborough, wrote a Version of the Psalms in Anglo-Saxon, which, it has been supposed, is that found between the lines of a very ancient Roman Psalter now among the Cottonian Manuscripts of the British Museum. Baber says of the MS. that “it has well-grounded pretension to be one of the books which Pope Gregory the Great sent to Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, soon after his arrival in England.” The fact that it is a *Roman* Psalter confirms this view; for, while the Roman was introduced in Canterbury, the *Gallican* was used in other parts of the island.

Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, produced another Anglo-Saxon Version of the Psalms about the year 706. He had studied under the Abbot Adrian, and was among the first of the Saxon ecclesiastics who were distinguished for learning. In his treatise, "*De Laudibus Virginitatis*," he praises certain nuns for their daily study of the Holy Scriptures, a fact which seems to indicate that there was then extant a vernacular translation of the Bible. The Anglo-Saxon Version, discovered in the Royal library at Paris about the beginning of the present century, has been conjectured to be, at least in part, Aldhelm's production. The first fifty Psalms are in prose, and the rest in verse.

About a quarter of a century after the death of Aldhelm, the Venerable Bede of Jarrow devoted himself to the work of translation. The surrounding country was then thinly peopled, and the Tyne flowed silently through wooded banks and moorland, where now is heard the roar and tumult of machinery. Besides his History—our great authority in Saxon matters of that age—Commentaries, and Controversial Tracts, Bede rendered many portions of Scripture into his native tongue, none of which, however, are now extant. He is said to have acquired some acquaintance with Hebrew, and more with Greek, and to have had in his possession a Code of the Acts of the Apostles in the original, to the readings of which he frequently refers in a Commentary on that book. Bede's last task was a translation

of St. John's Gospel. Its completion is touchingly described by his disciple, St. Cuthbert, in a letter to his "fellow-reader, Cuthwin," on the death of their "father and master, whom God loved."

On the evening of the 26th of May, 735—Ascension Day, as St. Cuthbert informs us—the sacred retreat was unusually still. The monks trod with gentle step, and spoke in whispers. On a bed in one of the cells lay an aged priest. His wasted frame and sunken eye told that death was near. His breathing was slow and laboured. At his side sat a young scribe, with parchment and pen in hand, looking up with tenderness in the face of the dying man. "There remains now only one chapter, but it seems difficult for you to speak," exclaims the scribe. "It is no trouble; take your pen, and make ready and write as fast as you can." "Now, master," says the scribe, "now only one sentence is wanting." He answered "Write quickly." Soon after, the scribe said, "The sentence is now written." He replied, "It is well; you have said the truth. It is ended. Receive my head into your hands, for it is a great satisfaction to me to sit facing my holy place, where I was wont to pray. And now glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost," and, with the utterance of these words, his spirit fled.

Thus died the Venerable Bede. What a noble death—to die in harness—in translating the Word of God!

The next name which attracts our attention



in connection with the translation of the Scriptures is Alfred the Great, King of England. He was born in 849 A.D., succeeded to the throne in 871, died in 901, in the fifty-second year of his age, and was interred in the Church of Great Driffield, in Yorkshire.

The character of Alfred shines with brilliant lustre in the records of history, and he is esteemed as one of the wisest and best Princes that ever adorned the annals of any nation. His reputation rests on the solid foundation of intellectual, moral, and religious worth. As a King, he was eminent for his civil and military qualities, and did everything possible for the welfare of his people; as a man, he set them a good example. The Christian graces were fully exemplified in his disposition. Even virtues apparently opposite were happily blended together; he was just, yet merciful; stern, yet gentle. Nature had also endowed him with personal attractions, such as vigour, dignity, and fine features.

“ The pious Alfred—King to justice dear,  
Lord of the harp and liberating spear.”

On the cessation of hostilities with the Danes, Alfred's first concern was the civilization of the country by arts, as he had defended it by arms; for so deep was the popular ignorance that, according to his own testimony, hardly any one south of the Thames could read the ritual of the Church, or translate a Latin letter. In order to accomplish his object he repaired the monasteries and replenished their

libraries; he founded and endowed colleges at Oxford; he established schools everywhere, and enjoined by law all freeholders possessed of two hides\* of land or more to send their children to school for their instruction, and invited the most celebrated scholars in Europe to his Court. Asser, the greatest scholar and divine in Wales, for example, lived with the King for six months in the year, and became his warmest friend, and afterwards his attached biographer. Alfred gave a still further proof of his zeal for the cause of learning by his own example. He divided his time into three equal portions—one was given to sleep, diet, and exercise; another to the discharge of public business; and the third to study and devotion. Without such regular distribution, as well as diligent application, of his time, he could neither have gathered his vast stores of knowledge, nor achieved the literary work he is reputed to have done. He is said to have been the best Saxon poet of his time, and composed in verse various fables, parables, and stories suited to the instruction of an unenlightened people. He also translated many treatises, as, "Gregory's Pastoral Care," "Bede's Ecclesiastical History," "The Universal History of Orosius"—*De Miseria Hominum*—and "Boëthius on the Consolation of Philosophy," with which last he was so much enamoured that he always carried it in his bosom. At the head of his "Book of

\* A hide contained about 100 acres.

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Alfred expresses the wish that "all the free-born youth of his people may persevere in learning, until they can perfectly read the English Scriptures." He is said to have translated the Old and New Testaments. It is at least certain that he was engaged in his latter days upon a translation of the Psalms, but did not live to complete it. "O, Alfred!" we may justly exclaim in the words of an old writer, "the wonder and astonishment of all ages! if we reflect upon the devout part of him, he seems to have lived always in a *cloister*; if on his conduct and exploits in the field, one would think he had spent his days in the *camp*; if on his writings and studies, one would conclude the *university* had engrossed him; and, lastly, if we regard his prudence and skill in the administration of government, he seems to have made *law* and *politics* his whole study."

Alfred, however, although most accomplished,

"Wearing all that weight  
Of learning lightly, like a flower,"

was yet deeply penetrated with the sense of the true and perfect knowledge, which is to know and abase ourselves. For the greatest perfection of this life is not without imperfection, and men are wisest when they know their own ignorance and frailty. "This," declared he, "is now especially to be said after my life—that I have wished to live worthily while I lived, and to leave to the men that should be after me my remembrance in good

works." The sense of duty was keenly felt by him, and in the following quaint phrase he humbly acknowledges the source whence all strength for the performance of duty must be derived — "When the good things of life are good, then are they good through the goodness of the good man that worketh good with them, and he is good through God."

Among the Cotton Manuscripts in the British Museum is a beautiful Latin copy of the four Gospels, known as the "Book of Durham," the "Gospels of St. Cuthbert," or the "Lindisfarne Gospels." It is said to have been written by Eadfrid, Bishop of Lindisfarne. Two centuries later, Aldred, a priest of Holy Isle, added an interlinear Anglo-Saxon "gloss" or word-for-word translation.

Another translation of the Gospels similar to the last both in age and in character, the Anglo-Saxon words being written between the lines of the Latin text, is found in the Bodleian library, and is called the "Rushworth Gloss," or the "Gospels of Macregol" (from the name of the scribe who wrote the Latin text). It has coloured initials and ornamental delineations of the Evangelists. The translators have preserved their names. At the end of the volume are these words:—"Pray for Owun that this book glossed, and Farmen priest at Harewood."

In the reign of the weak and irresolute monarch, "the Unready" Ethelred (976-1016), the monk Ælfric — "the Grammarian," as he has been called — distinguished himself by his

industry and learning, and became Abbot of Peterborough in 1004, and Archbishop of York in 1023. He wrote a treatise on the Old and New Testaments, and translated several historical books of the former into the vernacular language, which was published by Thwaites from a MS. in the Bodleian, with the title "Heptateuchus, Liber Job," &c., Oxon., 1698. He gives, as a rule, correct renderings, but he frequently substitutes paraphrases and statements of his own, which generally express the meaning of the original. He also composed eighty homilies, upon which his fame as an author chiefly rests. These excited great attention during the Reformation, and were appealed to — especially the Paschal homily — to prove that the doctrines of the English Church were at variance with those held by the Church of Rome.

During the period when the Danish invasions swept over our shores, spreading terror and devastation, very little seems to have been done in the way of translating the Word of God. It was a time of insecurity and literary unproductiveness, unlike the glorious and fertile reign of Alfred, and only a few manuscripts of the Psalms remain.

The conquest of England by William of Normandy (1066) wrought great changes, both social and literary. Feudalism, that is, the system by which persons holding a feud or fief were bound to serve the owner at home or abroad in wars, metamorphosed completely the relation between the people and the nobles, and

the adoption of the supremacy of the Pope affected the position of the Church. Norman-French, one of the dialects which sprang out of the decaying Latin, became the language of the law-courts and of the aristocracy. The Anglo-Saxon was ignored, but being the language of the common people it was not extinguished. It held its ground as regards its vocabulary, the Norman, it is reckoned, adding one word for every three of the Saxon, but it was destined to undergo many grammatical modifications. For example, its sounds were altered, syllables were cut short in the pronunciation, and the terminations and inflections of words were toned down until they were entirely lost. Dr. Johnston expresses his opinion that the Normans affected the Anglo-Saxon more in this manner than by the introduction of new words. The language which resulted from the coalition of the Saxon with the Norman was the beginning of the present English.

During this transition period, no religious work of special importance made its appearance, with the exception of—

(1) The "Ormulum," a metrical paraphrase of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, written by an Augustinian monk, Orm or Ormin, late in the 12th, or early in the 13th century; and

(2) "Sowlehele" or "*Salus Animæ*," soul-heal, belonging also to the 12th or 13th century—a large volume containing amongst other poems a paraphrase of the Old and New Testaments in verse. Both manuscripts are to be

found in the Bodleian library. A similar work—"Story of Genesis and Exodus"—is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi, Cambridge.

The earliest of all the English *prose* translations of Scripture known to be in existence are two Versions of the Psalter.

The former of these was executed by William de Schorham, who, in 1320, became vicar of Chart-Sutton, in Kent.

The second was rendered by Richard Rolle,\* the Hermit of Hampole, near Doncaster, who sought "no strange English, but easiest and commonest, and such as is most like the Latin." He also wrote several theological works, and a curious old poem entitled "Prick of Conscience." He died in 1349. According to Baber, "His life was devotion, and his amusement study."

Explanatory notes on particular portions of the Bible were not scarce in those days, and they afford specimens of the legendary lore with which the teachers of the Middle Ages sought to edify and instruct their hearers, most of the prominent facts of Biblical history being interwoven with the popular romances—

"Where in the chronicle of wasted time  
We see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
And Beauty making beautiful old rhyme  
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights."

This constituted the only means of education within the reach of the people; they were entirely at the mercy of the priests, and we need not

\* See *The Scottish Review*, No. 10.



therefore be surprised at their superstition, ignorance, and weakness. They asked for bread, but they received a stone, and they were perishing for lack of spiritual food. But God—

“Who moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform”—

raised up one who was destined to reform the Church, and to elevate and strengthen the people by rousing them from their lethargy, and by presenting them with the true and abiding staple of existence, even Jesus Christ—the Light of the World, the Bread of Life. This individual was John Wycliffe.





### CHAPTER III.

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#### JOHN WYCLIFFE.

THAT "the world knows nothing of its greatest men" is true in more senses than one. Of many who have wielded the most potent influence on the minds of their fellow-men little remains but a name. The very personality of Homer, the blind bard of Chios, is disputed; of the "thousand-souled" Shakespeare, the poet for all time, how scanty are the authentic records; and Wycliffe, the Father of the Reformation, has been compared to the "voice of one crying in the wilderness"—a voice and nothing more—a mighty agency which, like the breath of God, blowing where it listeth, is known only in its effects.

Of the birth, parentage, and early education of John Wycliffe nothing definite is known. He seems, however, to have been born about the year 1324 A.D., in the Parish of Wye-cliffe or Water-Cliffe, near Richmond, in Yorkshire. It is said that he was early intended for the Church, and, in the seventeenth year of his age, entered Queen's College, Oxford, which was founded in 1340. He soon after changed his quarters to Merton College, where had studied some of the most eminent names of

mediaeval literature and science—Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, Occham, Robert Grosstête (or Great-head), the distinguished Bishop of Lincoln, Burley, the Preceptor of Edward III., Eastwood, the astronomer, and Bradwardine, the profound scholar and eloquent divine, who became Archbishop of Canterbury. Wycliffe applied himself with ardour and success to his studies, but the departments in which he excelled were scholastic philosophy and Divinity, "second to none in philosophy and in scholastic studies incomparable," and the knowledge he acquired in those branches soon led to important results. It revealed to him the abominations of Popery, and induced him ere long not only to disregard the hierarchy of Rome and its clergy, but with rare dialectic skill to wage an internecine war with its rotten system. How far in after life he became acquainted with Langland, the author of "Piers Plowman's Vision," and with Chaucer, the Father of English poetry, we do not know, but the noble triumvirate, by wit, logic, and satire, strove together to expose the usurpation and licentiousness of the Church of Rome.

Wycliffe's first publication is a treatise entitled "The Last Age of the Church," which appeared in the year 1356. It is an attempt to prove that the world would come to an end with the then current century, but like all such whimsical prophecies it proved false. The idea seems to have been suggested by the impression left by the Black Death or pestilence, which ravaged Europe between the years 1345 and 1349. This

tract, however, though worthless as a prophetic work, is, as one of his biographers says, "extremely valuable as a manifestation of the vigour with which he was girding himself up for a conflict with the powers and principalities of the Papal Empire."

But in an especial manner did he make himself obnoxious about 1360 by the opposition he made to the Mendicant Friars, who interfered with the discipline and privileges of the University of Oxford, and had "so thwarted and opposed the academic authorities, that the number of students had dwindled down to 6,000, while, according to Wood, there had been 30,000 in the days of Henry III." The cause of the University came before Parliament, where Wycliffe advocated in person the views he had espoused, and though he was successful here, and the Pope promised to behave better for the future, yet the question was never settled until the statutes of "provisors" and "præmunire" were enacted, rendering it penal to procure any presentations to benefices from the Court of Rome, and securing the rights of all patrons and electors which had been encroached on by the Pope, and even then the offence was not absolutely removed.

Meanwhile Wycliffe was elected to the Mastership of Balliol College, in 1361, and before the close of the year he was presented to the rectory of Fylingham in Lincolnshire, which enabled him to prosecute his studies in comfort, without taking him away from the University, where he continued to reside, teach, and preach.

It has been remarked that from the time of his accepting the rectory of Fylingham to his death, twenty-three years later, we never lose sight of him for any length of time. But, though we then "obtain a firm historical footing," we are by no means beyond the pale of doubt.

In 1365 Archbishop Islep of Canterbury appointed him warden of Canterbury Hall, in Oxford, in room of a friar, who had been expelled on account of his contumacy. Some time after this, Simon Langham, Islep's successor, thought fit to eject Wycliffe, and to restore the same friar, who had been turned out by his predecessor. Wycliffe unsuccessfully appealed against the sentence to the Pope, Urban V., but lost "no reputation by this deprivation, as all sensible people saw the unworthy motives which had dictated the Pope's decision."

This appointment has evoked much controversy, the Reformer having been confounded with another priest of the same name, John de Whytcliff, who was nominated by Archbishop Islep to the vicarage of Mayfield, in July, 1361; exchanged that living in December, 1380, for that of Horsted Kaynes; and died as its Rector in November, 1383.

Between 1363 and 1366 Wycliffe took the degree of Doctor, or "professor or teacher of Divinity," which constituted the right to teach theology in all its branches, and along with the right, doubtless, in his eyes, the duty to propagate his convictions amongst his pupils. It was about this time that he composed many of his Latin sermons which are in manuscript, sketched

the outlines of his two great works, the "Trilogus" and the "Summa Theologiae," which he elaborated towards the close of his consecrated life, and sent out a band of missionaries imbued with his own heroic, self-denying spirit—true-hearted men, who preached a simpler and more edifying religion than was then current. Their influence was great. "Men came to mock them, but went away struck to the heart, overawed, humbled, and converted. At the same time that they arrested the attention and commanded the passions of the vulgar, they challenged the most refined to the contest; and it seems to be generally admitted that no one was found able to cope with them in the field of argumentation. Though the multitude are not qualified to be direct judges of the higher powers of intellect, and though they are often made the dupes of loquacious effrontery, yet there is something in true genius and sterling merit which, when skillfully employed for that purpose, will produce a more powerful and extraordinary effect than ignorant assurance can ever reach."

Wycliffe's entrance into public life brought out the magnanimity of the man.

In the year 1366, Pope Urban V., either indignant at the renewal of the "provisors" and "præmunire" statutes, or presuming on the waning fortunes of the King, claimed payment, in a threatening letter to Edward III., not only of the thousand merks which King John had promised to pay annually to the Pope, but, in default of payment, summoned the King to appear at the Court of Rome. The King laid the

matter before Parliament, and the Reformer, on being consulted, seconded the King's opinions in a learned disquisition, which became the mouthpiece of the nation. "The question is," he says, "whether the kingdom of England, under the pressing necessity of self-defence, may prevent the exportation of treasure, even when it is demanded by our lord the Pope, and under the pain of ecclesiastical censures." Leaving "to council learned in the law to tell what is said by the canon, the civil, or the common law," he proposes "to maintain the affirmative by the law of Christ." But to lay a firm foundation for his argument, he proposes to establish the right of self-defence by the law of nature. "All natural bodies, even those which are inanimate, are gifted by nature with the qualities necessary for their conservation—the stone has hardness to withstand violence, and coldness to resist the action of fire. England is a body—a body corporate, of which its three Estates are the members; therefore England has this power. In the next place, no power is given by nature which may not lawfully be used for the purpose for which it is given: on the principles of the gospel, *the Pope has no right to ask for money except as an alms for the purposes of charity*; but charity begins at home, and it would not be charity, but folly, to send abroad supplies for the want of which the country is perishing at home. But that the Pope is entitled to temporal goods only as an alms is clear from the example of Christ, who was made poor (2 Cor. viii. 9); and it is only in the shape of a perpetual

alms that all the clergy have received the endowments of their churches. . . . But not less is the payment in dispute forbidden by the law of conscience. Rulers are bound to maintain in their integrity the possessions of all classes, and to respect the wills of the founders. Now the funds from which the Pope derives his revenues in this country have been given by the piety of our ancestors—not to the Church in general, but the English Church in particular—for pious uses; and it is clearer than light, that if the Pope obtains these funds, those uses must fail. The souls of our ancestors must be defrauded of the suffrages they had intended to secure; the kingdom whose defence is entrusted to our rulers is betrayed by their culpable connivance at this robbery.” We have no room for further quotations from this trenchant tract; by the impulse it gave to the nation, Parliament decided unanimously that no Prince had the right to alienate the sovereignty of the kingdom; that England belonged not to the Pope, and if he should attempt to proceed against the King of England as his vassal, the nation should rise in a body to maintain the independence of the Crown. To no purpose did the partizans of Rome assert that by the canon law the King ought to be deprived of his fief, and that England now belonged to the Pope. “No,” replied Wycliffe, “the canon law has no force where it is opposed to the Word of God.” On account of this bold stand, Edward III. made Wycliffe one of his chaplains, and the Duke of Lancaster, commonly known as John of Gaunt, perceiving his ability, learning, and inde-



pendence, took a lively interest in him, and became his patron and friend. "Now," says Fuller, "came the Parliament which mauled the Papal power in England. Some former laws had pared the Pope's nails to the quick, but this cut off his finger in effect; so that hereafter his hands could not hold nor grasp such vast sums of money as before." By thus strenuously opposing Rome this Parliament has been called "The Good Parliament."

In 1368 Wycliffe exchanged Fylingham for Ludgershall, in Buckinghamshire. His fame was now rapidly growing, as is shown by the fact that in 1374 he was appointed as one of the embassy sent by Edward III. to Pope Gregory XI., who was then resident at Avignon, in France, to treat with his Holiness about the Papal practice of conferring the richest benefices on foreigners, and concerning other abuses against which the English Parliament had recently passed several laws and resolutions. The Pope did not receive the embassy in person, but certain Bishops were appointed to confer with them at Bruges, in Belgium, the other delegates being the Earl of Salisbury, Sudbury, Bishop of London, and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The result of a protracted conference was a compromise—only a partial alleviation of the evils complained of, though the statutes of "provisors" and "præmunire" still remained in force. But Wycliffe's hatred of the then prevalent ecclesiastical system was intensified by his stay at Bruges, as it enabled him to be better informed of the corruptions and artifices

of the Roman hierarchy, and to trace them to the fountain whence they flowed.

About 1375 Wycliffe was presented to the rectory of Lutterworth, in Leicester, where his last days were spent. He now began to attack more openly and vigorously the Pope and the Church. In one of his sermons he calls the Pope "Antichrist, the proud-worldly priest of Rome, and the most cursed of clippers and purse-kervers." Again, "the Gospel," says he, "is the only source of religion. The Roman Pontiff is a mere cutpurse, and, far from having a right to reprimand the whole world, he might be lawfully reprov'd by his inferiors, and even by laymen." This bold language alarmed the Papacy, and William Courtenay, then Bishop of London, summoned the Reformer to appear before the Convocation assembled in the Lady Chapel of Old St. Paul's. The priests had spared no pains to excite the people against him, and on February 19th, 1377, an immense crowd thronged the aisles. Wycliffe was attended by Lord Percy, Marshal of England, and the Duke of Lancaster, followed by four Bachelors of Divinity. As they passed through the hostile multitudes, the Duke of Lancaster said, "Let not the sight of these Bishops make you shrink a hair's-breadth in your profession of faith: they are unlearned; and as for this concourse of people, fear nothing; we are here to defend you." Wycliffe moved on. Courtenay, who had been commissioned by the Archbishop to preside, was much displeased at seeing the culprit attended by such distinguished protectors, and, turning to

Percy, said sharply, "Lord Percy, if I had known what maisteries you would keep in my church, I would have estopped you from coming thither." The Duke immediately retorted that Lord Percy would keep mastery there, even if the Bishop should say nay. Percy now turned to Wycliffe, who had remained standing, and said, "Sit down and rest yourself." This put the Bishop into a "fumish chafe," and he exclaimed aloud, "He must not sit down; criminals stand before their judges." The Duke was indignant at this refusal, and added, "As for you, my Lord Bishop, who are grown so proud and arrogant, I will bring down the pride not of you alone but of all the Prelacy of England." "Do me all the harm you can," was Courtenay's haughty reply. Much altercation ensued, and the meeting broke up in wild confusion.

The matter, however, did not rest here. In May, 1377, Gregory XI., on his return from Avignon to Rome, issued five "bulls," bearing on this memorable case. Three of these (along with a schedule of the errors charged against him) were addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, authorising them, if they could, to seize and imprison the culprit, and if they could not, to cite him to appear at Rome. The fourth was addressed to the University of Oxford, blaming them for tolerating so long this "master of errors," and charging them to see that he appeared before the delegates. The fifth was addressed to the King, urging and requiring him, as he valued

the peace of the kingdom, as well as the honour of the Church, to aid the delegates in every possible way, and to "retain the said John in sure custody, and *in chains*." Nothing, however, was in the meantime done, and what saved Wycliffe was the breaking out of the great schism, on the death of Gregory XI., in the year 1378, by the election of two Popes—Urban at Rome, and Clement at Avignon. This division, which lasted thirty-eight years, paralysed Rome to such an extent as to render her incapable of grappling with and overpowering her adversaries; and Wycliffe appears to have taken full advantage of the occasion to counteract the pernicious influence of the priests by enlightening the minds of the people. A striking incident occurred at this time. In the beginning of 1379, when labouring under a serious malady, some Mendicant Friars entered his room, in order to induce him to recant what they considered as heresy. Little did they know the man with whom they had to deal. Lifted up in bed by his servants, and emaciated as he was, he cried with a loud voice, "I shall not die but live, and yet declare the evil deeds of the friars." The following lines from Chaucer may well be applied to Wycliffe—

"A good man there was of religion,  
He was a poor parson of a town,  
But rich he was of holy thought and work;  
He was a learned man, also a clerk,  
That Christ's Gospel truly would preach;  
Benign he was and wondrous diligent,  
And in adversity full patient."

Soon after his recovery Wycliffe attacked with redoubled vehemence the doctrine of transubstantiation, asserting that the consecrated host is neither Jesus Christ nor any part of Him, and declaring that the Church had been in error many years concerning the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and that he was resolved to reduce it from idolatry to the spiritual worship of the true God. These tenets naturally provoked great excitement and animosity, and a meeting was accordingly held at Blackfriars, London, composed of eight Bishops, fourteen Doctors of Law, and six of Divinity, with fifteen friars and four monks, forming in all a Council of forty-seven learned men, to consider what steps should be taken to suppress the new and detested doctrines, and prosecute Wycliffe and his adherents. It chanced, however, just as they were about to discuss the four-and-twenty propositions, which they regarded as heretical, that the city of London was shaken by an earthquake, when some of those present doubted whether their assembly met with the approbation of Heaven; but their President, Courtenay, now Archbishop of Canterbury, inspirited them, and remarked that it required an earthquake of opinion, and a determined struggle to silence such teachers as John Wycliffe, "whereat the meeting proceeded and condemned all his opinions, declaring that he should certainly not be permitted to preach them any more." This is the Synod which Wycliffe in his Trialogue calls the Earthquake Synod. This sentence gave Wycliffe more leisure for writing,

and Lutterworth was henceforth the scene of his labours. Among other tracts penned at his quiet retreat, he wrote one entitled "The great Sentence of Excommunication explained," wherein he expounded many of his articles that had been condemned. "They set up," say he, "the standard of Jesus Christ, the sovereign teacher of peace, mercy, and charity, in order to murder Christians for the sake of two knavish priests, who are manifestly antichrist. When shall we see the proud priest of Rome grant plenary indulgences to engage men to live in peace, charity, and forbearance, as he does to animate Christians to cut one another's throats?"

It was about this time, 1380, that Wycliffe began his translation of the Scriptures. His first attempt was the Apocalypse of St. John. The Old Testament was being similarly prepared by a true yoke-fellow, Nicolas de Hereford, as it is commonly believed, aided by a brave band of helpers, and it is said that Wycliffe availed himself of the labours of Hereford and completed his unfinished work. Wycliffe's writings display ample arguments in defence of Holy Writ and in support of vernacular translations. "As the faith of the Church," he says, "is contained in the Scriptures, the more these are known in an orthodox sense, the better. And since secular men should assuredly understand the faith, it should be taught them in whatever language is best known to them."

"Off the book that had been a sealed-up book  
He tore the clasps, that the nation  
With eyes unbandaged might thereon look  
And learn to read salvation."

The translation was completed a year or two after its commencement, and it is interesting to know that while he was engaged in the task it was his custom to put into his pocket the portion he had translated daily and read it to his parishioners, rich and poor, as he visited them in their houses. Wycliffe was not acquainted with the Greek or Hebrew language. He made his translation (the first complete translation of the Scriptures) of the New Testament from the Latin Vulgate of Jerome, as he did also his version of the Old Testament. It was a vast undertaking, and to him are justly due the admiration and gratitude of his countrymen for the accomplishment of a work, which introduced a light that gradually dispelled the gross darkness which for centuries had brooded over the land, and put an end to ignorance, imposture, and superstition. "One is surprised to see how, when Wycliffe's work is modernized in spelling, it so closely resembles subsequent translations in the general aspect of the version, in the flow and position of the words, in the distinctive terms and connecting particles, in the rhythm of its clauses, and the mould of its sentences. Several of its phrases must have passed early into the language, especially those which from their currency had acquired a kind of proverbial power, such as "strait gate" and "narrow way," "beam" and

"mote," and being adopted by Tyndale, they have kept their place unto this present . . . Wycliffe is easily read, though not a few of his words are obsolete. His theological nomenclature, part of which he had learned from Bradwardine, has not been changed to any great extent, and many of the terms explained in the margin of the MSS., as if needing explanation, are now part of the language, while the explanatory terms have themselves disappeared."

Wycliffe wrote for the people, encouraged persons to transcribe copies of his translation of the Bible, and urged men, in spite of hardships and persecutions, to read in their mother tongue the marvellous works of God. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed," for their weapons were not carnal. They had in their possession arms more potent than carnage and bloodshed. They had the Bible in their hands and in their hearts. Here lay the true secret of their strength; and men and women who had come under its mighty influence sought to impart its gracious blessings to others. They went and told what great things the Lord had done for them, and to us in this far-off century enjoying civil and religious liberty they seem to say—

"Arise, ye children of the light,  
And buckle on the armour bright,  
And now prepare yourselves to fight  
Against the world and Satan."

Wycliffe was now the direct object of the worst passions of the unsanctified human heart—



spleen, hatred, revenge. He was nicknamed "the devil's instrument, the Church's enemy, the people's confusion, the heretic's idol, the hypocrite's mirror, a sower of hatred, a forger of lies, a sink of flattery." But, however deep the malice of Wycliffe's enemies, and however strenuous their efforts to oppose and put him down, the work he had done was of such a nature that man could not destroy it. It was of God, and it prospered. The corruptions of the Romish Church were exposed by the withering sarcasm of the poet, the Biblical research of the preacher, and the Christian valour of the peer. The nation, quickened by the torch of truth and strengthened by the words of inspiration, was roused from its slumber to a sense of its Divine mission of Evangelisation entrusted to it through the unsealing of the Book of books; and comprehending the responsibility resting upon it as the recipient of so many mercies, it broke, like Samson, the withs of Romish superstition by which it had been so long enthralled, and by its ceaseless and determined efforts has ever since, in faithful and proud defiance of the storms which from time to time have gathered against it, gone on developing, as our forefathers could have but dimly anticipated, its complete emancipation. Wycliffe sowed, the Reformers watered, and God has given the increase.

At last the end came. While he was in the Church on the 29th of December, 1384, he was seized with a fit of palsy; he never

recovered the use of his speech, and on the last day of the year he passed away into that land where the voice of calumny is for ever hushed, and where the heaviest-laden wayfarer lays down his load.

“To die is landing on some silent shore,  
Where billows never break, nor tempests roar.”

In a copy of a richly illuminated Missal containing the Hussite Liturgy, Wycliffe is pictured at the top lighting a spark, Huss below him blowing it to a flame, Luther still lower waving on high the lighted torch. It is a true picture of “that succession in which one after another they followed with brightening lustre this Morning Star of the Reformation, till the sky glowed through all its arch with the radiance of the upspringing light.”

Ten years after Wycliffe's death a Bill was brought into the House of Lords to forbid the reading of the English Bible. Twenty-four years after his death (1408), a meeting was held in St. Paul's to ordain that no book of his should be read in public or private under pain of excommunication; but it was all in vain. His writings, and especially his translation of the Bible, were eagerly canvassed by all classes, and the latter became “the Book of the people.”

Forty years after his death, his doctrine was condemned by the Council of Constance, which also ordered that his body should be exhumed and burned. This was done, and the ashes were cast into the Swift, the small stream which flows along the foot of the hill on which the

town of Lutterworth lies. "Thus," says quaint old Thomas Fuller, "the brook conveyed his ashes to the Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine which now is dispersed all the world over." And could this noble champion of the faith have anticipated, ere he had been glorified, such a sacrilegious action, we could well imagine him applying to himself the following lines of the sacred bard—

"I know not what the future hath  
Of marvel or surprise,  
Assured alone that life and death  
His mercy underlies.

I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air;  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care."

There are still to be seen, in the identical Parish Church in which Wycliffe ministered, his pulpit, his black oak writing-table, his study-chair of similar material, as well as the remains of his black velvet preaching gown adorned with gold lace, as it hangs for the sake of preservation in its glass case in the vestry room. Nearly three hundred of his sermons are also preserved, consisting chiefly of simple expositions of Scripture, and treating much of the atonement of our Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit. These, and other works, are likely to be published by the Wycliffe Quincentenary Society. The present Church forms to the tourist an object of interest, inasmuch as it

stands just as it was in the days of the great Reformer, with the lines of the original stone-work brought out firm and clear owing to the joints of the masonry having been carefully scraped and pointed under the supervision of the late Rector. It is worthy of note that the stone-work of the Church is, as it were, composed of smooth round paving stones, while the mullions of the windows are made, according to the custom of the period, irregularly without any regard to long and short stones of the present age. It will interest, no doubt, the reader to be informed, as a standing memorial of the priest-craft of Rome which is still maintained by them in their chapels, that there is still in one of the piers supporting the chancel-arch of the hagioscope, an open (literally sacred view), through which the people in the north aisle caught a glimpse of the elevation of the host or Wafer-God which the papists are taught by their priests to believe to be, by a process called transubstantiation, the very body, bones, flesh, and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

Such is a brief memoir of John Wycliffe—"that Englishman," to use the words of Milton, "honoured of God to be the first preacher of a general Reformation to all Europe."

"The memory of the just is blessed."





## CHAPTER IV.

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### WYCLIFFITE VERSIONS AND EARLY PRINTING.

A REVISED Version of Wycliffe's translation appeared towards the close of the fourteenth century, probably in 1388, executed by John Purvey, with the help of "divers fellows." The manuscript is preserved in the library of the Dublin University. Purvey was born at Lathebury, near Olney, in Buckinghamshire. According to Knyghton, he boarded with Wycliffe, and thus "drank more plentifully of his instructions, and to his dying day he followed his master." After Wycliffe's death he removed to Bristol, where his zeal for preaching brought him into trouble. Being apprehended, and terrified by the fate of the martyr Sautre, who was burned for heresy, he openly recanted at St. Paul's Cross in 1400, and was immediately afterwards presented to the vicarage of Hythe by Archbishop Arundel. He resigned this charge in 1403, was imprisoned a second time in 1421 by Archbishop Chichele, was alive for some years after, but when or how he died is unknown. In his prologue he says, "At the beginning I purposed, with God's help, to make the sentences as true

and open in English as it is in Latin, either more true and open than it is in Latin; and I pray for charity and for common profit of Christian souls, that if any wise man find any default of the truth of translation, let him set in the true sentence and open of Holy Writ . . . for . . . the common Latin Bibles have some need to be corrected, as many as I have seen in my life, than hath the English Bible late translated . . . Therefore a translator hath need to study well the sentence, both before and after, and . . . hath need to live a clean life, and be full devout in prayers, and have not his wit occupied about worldly things, that the Holy Spirit, author of wisdom and knowledge and truth, dress him in his work, and suffer him not to err . . . God grant to us all grace to know well and keep well Holy Writ, and suffer joyfully some pain for it at the last! Amen."

Purvey speaks here of "a simple creature who hath translated the *Bible* out of Latin in English." By *Bible* he means, of course, the Holy Scriptures. It is derived from the Greek *Biblion*, the plural of which, *Biblia*, the Greek Fathers used to denote Holy Writ. The Saxon equivalent was "*ge-writ*," and the French, Germans, and Italians speak of *La Bible*, *Die Bibel*, and *La Biblia*, respectively. Sometimes the word "bible" signified any book. For example, Chaucer in his *House of Fame* says, "Men might make of them a bible twenty foot thick;" and in his *Canterbury Tales* he tells us that the study of this doctor of physic "was but little on the bible."

Purvey made many changes on the early Version. In the first chapter of Matthew, for example, Wycliffe employs the word *forsooth* more than forty times, but Purvey not once.

There are many marginal short comments, "glosses," taken for the most part from the celebrated commentator of the fourteenth century, Nicholas de Lyra \* (*Lire*).

The Wycliffite Versions differ in contents and arrangements from our ordinary Bibles. Many Apocryphal Books are admitted, and though there are many coincidences of expression to be found between Purvey's translation and our Authorised Version, its chief defect consists in its being rendered from the Latin Vulgate and not from the original tongue. The work, however, was popular and eagerly sought after. Manuscript copies were multiplied. "Even the Sovereign himself and the Princes of the blood royal did not disdain to possess them."

Wycliffe's followers were called "Lollards." Some derive the term from Walter Lollard, who was burned at Cologne in the 14th century; others suppose it to be derived from the German *lollen* or *lullen*, to sing softly, whence our English word *lull*. The Latin *lollium*, tares, as opposed to the true wheat, is also given as a probable derivation. Knyghton speaks of

\* Other authorities are often quoted, as Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Isadore, Hilary, and "the Gloss" (or "the Common Gloss"), and "the Gloss interlineary," the former being a compilation by Walafrid Stabo (about 840 A.D.), and the latter the work of Anselm of Laon (about 1100 A.D.).

Wycliffe as mingling tares with wheat in his sermons. Whatever be the origin of the word, its application was significant. It was another name for Protestant. Lollardism was a religious rather than a political movement. It was a vigorous protest against Popish abuses and doctrines, but it was difficult, nay almost impossible, to reform the Church, without its assuming a political character. So intimate, indeed, is the relation between Church and State, and withal so many interests involved, that it was nothing unusual for dissentients from the established faith and order of things to be branded as heretics and rebels. The Lollards did not escape persecution. And if some of them propounded extreme political views, they cannot be charged with treasonable practices, nor did they seek civil and social revolution under a religious guise.

The Act *De Heretico Comburendo*, passed in 1401, mentions "divers false and perverse people of a new sect; they make unlawful conventicles; they hold and exercise schools and make and write books." The books must have included the Bible, but it would be considered blasphemy to put an English Version on a level with the Latin Vulgate. Heresy was thus treated as a crime, and under this disgraceful act many persons poured out their heart's blood for the truth, among the most notable of whom was Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, whose "virtue made him a Reformer, and whose valour made him a martyr."

Other similar acts were passed, but they failed



in their purpose. People were not scared; the Bible was read, expounded, circulated, and cherished all the more.

We shall now notice an event which revolutionised the world of letters, and proved a mighty instrument in propagating the knowledge of the Scriptures—we mean the art of printing. The term “printing” usually denotes the art of making impressions of characters, figures, letters, with ink upon vellum, paper, or any similar substance, or, in other words, the process by which any piece of literary composition, written in any language, is converted into a book by means of types, ink, and paper. In ancient times, however, there was only one method known of making a copy of a literary production, which consisted chiefly in writing it over again. It was a tedious, slow, and costly method, and the copies were not always perfect reproductions of the original. The art of making them was called “caligraphy,” from two Greek words signifying *fine* and *writing*. It was principally practised by monks—“briefmen” or copyists, as they were called—who were specially trained, and who frequently spent a whole lifetime in executing a copy of one solitary work. The majority of manuscripts were not done in this high-class style, but executed in a more wholesale manner. In most of the monasteries there was a room called the “Scriptorium” set apart for this particular work of copying manuscripts, and tradition says that a monk was appointed to read aloud the words from the work to be copied, whilst the rest wrote down from

his dictation. The copies were then delivered to some learned person to revise, but despite the utmost care to prevent them errors often occurred, and not infrequently were overlooked. In modern times these mistakes or variations have given much trouble, particularly in the Holy Scriptures and religious manuscripts, and have been the cause of much controversy. A manuscript of the eighth century contains a prayer used at the consecration of the "Scriptorium," that what was written there might have the Divine blessing. Perfect silence was enjoined in this apartment in order to secure accuracy. Many nuns were remarkable for their expert and beautiful handwriting, and we read of one Diemudis, who wrote and ornamented ten mass-books or missals, besides copying two Bibles and some of the writings of the Fathers. The result of such severe application was often the early loss of eyesight. In the monastery of Clugni, in Burgundy, the Abbot Hugh had ten thousand monks under his charge, and every monk was expected to know the Psalms by heart. Their time was chiefly spent in transcribing copies of the Bible, or in reading it alternately with the works of the Fathers. St. Columba was distinguished for his industry in this department.

To the Chinese, however, it is generally believed, we are indebted for a vast improvement on this system of reproducing and multiplying copies of manuscripts by transcription. This ingenious people engraved the design of their writings on blocks of wood. This was

done the reverse of the original, and in relief. A pigment or colour for painting was applied to the surface of the design, and by pressure of some kind transferred to the material on which the copy was to be produced. It was not necessary to draw or engrave the block again, and as many *facsimiles* could therefore be had as were wanted. The block was generally of wood, hence this kind of printing was called *Xylography*, also taken from the Greek, from two words meaning *wood* and *writing*. This was the origin of printing as applied to literary purposes. The essence of printing, it will be seen, is therefore pressure—the mode of transferring the ink or design to the substance which is to form the copy. Many books were thus printed, and are known by the name of block-books, because each consisted of a single engraved block. The disadvantages of this plan are manifest. There must be as many blocks as there are pages in a book; these blocks cannot be used for printing any other works; besides the process is tedious and expensive. From their comparative cheapness, however, these books were called the “Bibles of the poor.” Yet they were no doubt beyond the reach of the humbler class, and commanded a price which in these days of cheap literature seems fabulous. The prices paid for some “Doctrinals,” or spelling-books are still on record, and point to a high value. A volume printed upon vellum, containing thirty-three pages of manuscript, interspersed with curious woodcuts, was some time ago sold

in London for £120. In the same collection were some playing-cards—the first attempts at printing—which fetched about £24.

But printing, though known at a very remote period in China, was not introduced thence into Europe. The Europeans had the honour of inventing this art for themselves, and the credit of being the first to use moveable types is contested by the Dutch in favour of Laurence Coster of Haarlem between A.D. 1420 and 1426, and by the Germans in favour of John Gutenberg or Gensfleisch of Mayence about the year 1435. Probably the discovery was made almost simultaneously. The types first used were of wood, but soon the practice of casting them in metal was introduced. Coster died in 1440, and specimens of his work are both rare and valuable. No complete work printed by him can now be traced, but single leaves are occasionally found in the binding of other books. "Doctrinals" seem to have been chiefly produced by him, and for this purpose he used wooden blocks, printing without a press and only on one side of the sheet. In this manner he printed the Grammar of Donatus, *Speculum nostrae salutis* (Mirror of our Salvation), and possibly other works, but examples of them have become so scarce that a complete copy of them is unknown. Six odd leaves of Donatus, which had been taken from the binding of other books, were lately sold for nearly £11.

To Gutenberg, however, we are indebted for the introduction of metal types in printing,

which, we think, no one will gainsay is the greatest and most useful invention the world has ever seen. For centuries his fame had been overshadowed by the impudent assertions of one Schœffer, who so long robbed him of the honour of his invention that it was not till the present century that the true history, through a great amount of research, of the invention of typography was ascertained. Like a great many more talented people, he was born poor, and frequently had recourse to borrowing, but latterly he was enabled, in 1450, to make some rich citizens of Mentz understand his invention so clearly that they supplied him with money to start a printing office, and in 1455 he produced a work that was worthy of the genius of the man. That work was the Bible, printed in Latin, and commonly known as the "Mazarin" Bible, because a copy was found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin. "This venerable and splendid Bible," says Hallam, "leading up the crowded myriads of its followers, and imploring, as it were, a blessing on the new art, by dedicating its first fruits to the service of Heaven." It is of quarto size, double columns, the initial letters of the chapters being executed with the pen in colours. It is also exceedingly rare and costly, and beautifully printed in two volumes, only eighteen copies of which are known to exist—four on vellum and fourteen on paper. Ten copies are in Britain—three in public libraries at Oxford, London, and Edinburgh; and seven in the private collections of different noblemen and gentlemen. In 1827 one of the vellum copies was

sold for £504, and another, at the sale of the Perkins' library, in 1873, brought £3,400. In 1457 an edition of the Psalter was published by Faust and Schœffer, the former of whom was for a short time co-partner with Gutenberg. It is remarkable for its elegance, but it is chiefly distinguished as the first book printed with a date. From this time, however, not only were the dates given, but the name also of the printer and the town where the work was executed. In 1488 the entire Hebrew Bible was printed at Soncino, near Cremona. The Greek Testament was not printed until 1514. In 1520 was published the famous Complutensian Polyglott, in six folio volumes, containing the original texts of Scripture, together with the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Chaldee paraphrase of the Pentateuch (with a Latin translation), Greek and Hebrew Grammars, and a Hebrew vocabulary. It derives its name from Complutum, the ancient name of Alcala, near Madrid. In 1528 Sanctes Pagninus published a Latin version of the whole Bible, which was highly prized, and is the first translation of the Old Testament in which the division into verses is given. In 1535 Sebastian Münster produced his valuable translation; and in 1543 Froschover printed at Zurich a Latin version of the Old Testament, begun by Leo Juda, and after his death, completed by his friend Zwingli, Pellican (author of the first Hebrew Grammar, and of Commentaries both on the Old and on the New Testaments), Bibliander, and others. Two translations in Italian appeared in 1471; a French Testament in 1477,

and the entire Bible translated by Le Fèvre (or Faber) in 1530; and five years later Olivetan, a cousin of John Calvin, published another translation. The Spanish New Testament, translated by Enzinas, was printed at Antwerp in 1543, and the whole Bible, by De Reyna, appeared in 1569. In September, 1522, Luther published his version of the New Testament, and in 1534 the entire Bible, including the Apocrypha, issued from the press. Before the middle of the sixteenth century translations of the Bible appeared in every European tongue.

In our own country, "the first attempt at giving forth any portion of the Scriptures in print is to be found in the *Exposition of the Seven Penitential Psalms*,\* by John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, which was published in the year 1505." For it is to be remembered that it was not till the year 1471 that the art of printing was introduced into England by William Caxton, and the first book which issued from his press in Westminster Abbey bore the title of "Game and Playe at Chesse." But he had previously printed, probably at Bruges, his translation of the *Æneid*, and entitled "The Recuyel of the Historyes of Troye." Then followed "The Dictes and Notable Wise Sayings of the Philosophers," and "The Doctrinal of Sapience," dated May 7th, 1489, and his "Golden Legend," dated 1483, which begins with the Advent of our Lord, and then proceeds to paraphrase the lead-

\* The Penitential Psalms are Psalms vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., cxliii.

ing events of Old Testament history. The "Golden Legend" derives its name, and much of the legendary lore with which it teems, from the Latin *Legenda aurea*, compiled by Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa, in 1298. The French translation of the same work, *La Légende dorée*, was executed by Jean Belet. There was also an English version, which was well known in Caxton's time.

In 1501 the art was brought to Scotland. The first Scottish printers were Walter Chapman, a merchant in Edinburgh, and Andrew Millar, a workman, who, in consequence of a patent from James IV., established a press at Edinburgh in 1507. "In 1508," says Dr. Irving "they are known to have printed various pamphlets, a collection of which may be found in the Advocates' library. The first volume of the "Breviarium Aberdonense," issued from the press in 1509; the second in 1510. Of this very rare book a complete and well-preserved copy belongs to the library of the University of Edinburgh. The establishment of printing-presses in the other principal towns of Scotland cannot so easily be traced. Knox's "Faythfull Admonition unto the Professours of God's Truthe in England," was, if we may credit the title-page, printed at Kalykow, or Kelso. This work appeared in 1554. Aberdeen, the seat of a University, could not boast of a printing-press till a much later period. In the colophon of a poem (1635) on the death of Bishop Forbes, Edward Raban styles himself 'master printer—the first in Aberdene.'" Many



of our Scottish productions of that age, however, were printed on the Continent, though Scotland can boast of ushering into the world two celebrated works—"History of Scotland," and a "Treatise on the Constitution of the Kingdom"—of the eminent classical scholar, George Buchanan (born, 1506; died, 1582). In 1579 appeared the first Bible printed in Scotland, a folio volume, "printed by Alexander Arbuthnot, printer to the King's Majestie." In 1551 printing reached Dublin.

It may not be out of place to add here a paragraph on the mechanical process of printing. Those of my readers who have visited a printing-office in town or country would observe a desk. This desk is divided into two pairs of cases, one full of Roman letters, and the other filled with Italic, so named Italic because they were first used in Italy, and stand inclined, as *those in which this clause is printed*, denoting for the most part emphasis, or calling attention to what is considered as important. These cases are divided into nearly one hundred partitions, some larger than others, according to the letters sure to be wanted. From experience the compositor—that is the person who sets up the type—has no difficulty in finding the letters he desires. A complete assortment of type is called a font, and they are distributed over two cases—an upper and lower—inclined and horizontal. In the upper case are kept all the capitals (two sets, known to the compositor as "caps" and "small caps"), also, diphthongs, reference marks, dashes, &c. In the lower case are kept the small letters and

figures, with the different points of punctuation, spaces, and quadrats. The letters that are most frequently used are put into the partitions nearest the compositor, and, standing before the pair of cases which contain the Roman letters he holds in his left hand what is called a *composing stick*. This is a little iron or brass frame, one side of which is movable, so that it may be adjusted to the required width of the page or column which the workman has to set up. It is perfectly square, and will hold about fourteen lines of the present type. One by one he places the letters for each word into the stick, and when it is filled he takes all the type out as if it were one piece of metal, and lifts it into what is called a *galley*, and the galley is filled by the contents of successive sticks. Care must be taken on removing the type from the stick to the galley, lest the whole fall to the ground, in which case printers call it *pie*. When as many lines are set up as fill a page they are tightly bound round with a cord, and when as many pages are set as fill a sheet they are arranged in proper order upon the *imposing stone*. Each page is surrounded with a piece of metal called *furniture*, to secure an equal margin for every page, and the whole is wedged tightly round in an iron *chase* or frame. This chase is termed a *forme*, from which, after being pressed by a heavy roller, a *proof*—the first printed sheet—is taken. The proof is then corrected by the *reader*, who seeks for the minutest mistakes. After the requisite number of copies is thrown off, the type is replaced into

the cases; this is called *distributing the type*, which takes about one-fourth of the time required for setting up the type. We often hear of stereotype-printing. The term is derived from the Greek *stereos*, solid, and *typos*, a type—hence stereotype-printing signifies printing from solid plates instead of movable types. This method of printing was invented by William Ged, first a goldsmith, and afterwards a printer in Edinburgh, about the year 1725. Others ascribe the honour to Van der Mey, a Dutch printer of the eighteenth century. Stereotype-plates are made by taking a mould in plaster from each page of movable type, and then casting metal into the mould. This process, however, has given place to what is called the Papier-Mache process:—A number of sheets of paper pasted together—good tough paper on the outside, to keep it from “cracking;” a sheet of blotting in the centre to give it “body;” and a tissue on face to give it “fineness.” This is kept in a damp state until wanted; it is then beaten with brushes into the forme of type; then, after laying a thick blanket and some sheets of brown paper over the matrix or mould to absorb the steam, it is placed on a hot stove to dry; to keep it from shrinking it is kept pressed down until dry. It is mainly used in printing books of steady sale, such as Prayer-books, Bibles, and School-books, and has the advantage of being cheap, no composition having to be paid for.

It is beyond our province to attempt to describe the many improvements which have been made from time to time in printing-presses, and particularly in connection with printing by steam; but it will reward the reader to pay a visit to any of the large printing-offices in London, Glasgow, or Edinburgh, and there witness with what rapidity sheet after sheet is thrown off. Nor can we undertake to estimate the advantages which the art of printing has conferred on mankind. The laborious and expensive mode of copying manuscripts is discarded. Books have become cheap and numerous, though we are only too apt to disregard the superior facilities of self-culture so graciously afforded us by Providence through means of the press. The artisan or day-labourer may now, with ease, become possessor of a library which would have been the object of envy to philosophers of ancient times. Plato paid £375 (a hundred minæ) for three short treatises of Philolaus, which might now be purchased for eighteen-pence. In those days the possessor of a few volumes was considered rich in literary wealth. But nearer our own time we find the same scarcity of the means of information. We read that Lupus, Abbot of Ferrieres in France, A.D., 885, sent two of his monks to Rome to beg from Pope Benedict III. a copy of Cicero *De Oratore*, Quintilian's *Institutiones*, and a few other books, assigning as a reason: "Although we have part of these books, yet there is no copy of them in all France." The arrival of a book in any town to which it was despatched

was the occasion of a public demonstration; parties were even summoned to witness the purchasing of books, while the disputed ownership of them often caused bitter quarrels and lawsuits. "Usurers themselves considered them as precious objects for pawn; a student of Pavia who was reduced by his debaucheries raised a new fortune by leaving in pawn a manuscript of a body of law; and a grammarian who was ruined by fire rebuilt his house with two small volumes of Cicero." Formerly, too, Bibles were very expensive; now-a-days they may be procured at a very low charge. In the 13th century we find that the price of a handsome Bible, with annotations, was (50 marks) £33 6s. 8d. This will be seen to be enormous when we consider the value of money at the time, it being equivalent to £500 of the present currency. The daily wages of a working man were then about three halfpence. To purchase a Bible, therefore, would require his savings for nearly eighteen years. The building of two new arches to London Bridge in 1240 was less expensive; they cost only £27 10s. These facts afford us an idea of how much we are indebted to the invention of printing. There is now no scarcity of books in any branch of literature. *Imprimit ille die quantum non scribitur anno*—i.e., the press will do in one day what cannot be done in one year in writing, hence the plentifulness and cheapness of books, the widespread circulation of which encourages reading; by reading knowledge is gained; knowledge dispels ignor-

ance, which is the mother of superstition; and superstition—the chief element of the Romish Church—degrades the true worship of God, and retards the progress of His Kingdom, which is light, liberty, love, and life. And if we would wish to live, in the true sense of the term, and be children of the light, we must cultivate the mind by reading pure and wholesome literature, and mastering a few good books, which are our best companions, especially by studying reverently and digesting the Book of books, for, *dimidium studii rite precatu habet*—*i.e.*, he who has prayed aright has half finished his study. Above all, we must carry the spirit of the teaching of the Bible into our daily common life, giving vent to high and noble feelings, and not absorbing every thought and desire in self, but striving earnestly and affectionately to promote the welfare of our fellow-men, for seeking their good we advance our own.

“ Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell,  
That mind and soul according well,  
May make one music as before  
But vaster.”

We have now reached the era of the Reformation, and the name of William Tyndale stands pre-eminent in that period of our history.





## CHAPTER V.

### WILLIAM TYNDALE.

WILLIAM TYNDALE was born about 1484, a century after the death of Wycliffe, and a year after the birth of Luther, in the Parish of North Nibley, in Gloucestershire. Little is known of his parents. He seems to have been related to, if not son of, a Baron de Tyndal, who during the Wars of the Roses assumed the name of Hutchins, or Hochens, and married Alicia, daughter and sole heiress of Hunt of Hunt's Court. On the title-page of his first avowed publication the name is "William Tyndale, otherwise called Hichens."

John Foxe says that "William Tyndale, the faithful minister and martyr of Christ, was born about the borders of Wales, and brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, grew up and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted. Insomuch that he, lying at Magdalen Hall, reading privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the

Scriptures. Whose manners also and conversation, being correspondent to the same, were such that all they which knew him reputed and esteemed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition, and of life unspotted."

After taking his degree, Tyndale removed about the year 1512 from Oxford to Cambridge, attracted thither, doubtless, by the fame of the great scholar Erasmus, who was from 1509 to 1514 Greek lecturer in that University, "where," proceeds Foxe, "after he had likewise made his abode a certain space, being now further ripened in the knowledge of God's Word, leaving that university also, he resorted to one Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children, and in good favour with his master." Tyndale's residence in the family of Sir John Walsh of Little Sodbury is thus graphically described by Foxe\* in his "Acts and Monuments," already quoted, and from which most of our information concerning Tyndale is derived: "Master Tyndale being in service with one Master Welch, a knight who married a daughter of Sir Robert Pointz, a knight dwelling in Gloucestershire, the said Tyndale being schoolmaster to the said Master Welch's children, and being in good favour with his master, sat most commonly at his own table, which kept a good ordinary, having resort to him many

\* It is supposed that Foxe got his particulars from Richard Webb, afterwards a servant of Latimer.



times divers great beneficed men, as Abbots, Deans, Archdeacons, and other divers Doctors and learned men, amongst whom commonly was talk of learning, as well of Luther and Erasmus Roterodamus as of opinions in the Scripture. The said Master Tyndale, being learned, and which had been a student of divinity in Cambridge, and had therein taken degree of school, did many times therein show his mind and learning, wherein as those men and Tyndale did vary in opinions and judgments, then Master Tyndale would show them on the book the places, by open and manifest Scripture. The which continued for a certain season divers and sundry times, until in the continuance thereof these great beneficed Doctors waxed weary, and bore a secret grudge in their hearts against Master Tyndale. . . . Then did he translate into English a book called, as I remember, 'Enchiridion Militis Christiani.'\* The which being translated, he delivered to his master and lady. And after they had read that book, those great prelates were no more so often called to the house, nor when they came had they cheer nor countenance as they were wont to have, the which they did well perceive, and that it was by the means and incensing of Master Tyndale, and at the last came no more there. After

\* "Pocket-Dagger of the Christian Soldier," a handbook of practical religion, showing that religion does not consist in accepting scholastic dogmas or in absurd observances, but in loyal service to our great Captain — Christ — and in conquering the evil that is in us and around us.

that, when there was a sitting of the Bishop's commissary or chancellor, and warning was given to the priests to appear, Master Tyndale was also warned to be there. And whether he had knowledge by their threatening, or that he did suspect that they would lay to his charge, it is not now perfectly in my mind; but thus he told me, that he doubted their examinations, so that he in his going thitherwards prayed in his mind heartily to God to strengthen him to stand fast in the truth of His Word; so he being there before them, they laid sore to his charge, saying he was a heretic in sophistry, a heretic in logic, a heretic in his divinity, and so continueth. But they said unto him, 'You bear yourself boldly of the gentlemen here in this country, but you shall be otherwise talked with.' Then Master Tyndale answered them: 'I am content that you bring me where you will into any country within England, giving me ten pounds a year \* to live with, so you bind me to nothing but to teach children and to preach.' Then had they nothing more to say to him, and thus he departed and went home to his master again. There dwelt not far off an old Doctor that had been Arch-Chancellor to a Bishop, the which was of old familiar acquaintance with Master Tyndale, who also favoured him well, to whom Master Tyndale went and opened his mind upon divers questions of the Scriptures, for he durst boldly open to him his mind. That ancient Doctor said, 'Do you not

\* Equal to about £150 at the present day.

know that the Pope is the very antichrist which the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say, for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion it will cost you your life;' and said, 'I have been an officer of his, but I have given it up, and defy him and all his works.' And soon after Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue that the learned man said, 'We were better be without God's law than the Pope's.' Master Tyndale hearing that, answered him, 'I defy the Pope and all his laws,' and said, 'If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou doest.'"

These words last quoted seem to have been suggested by a remarkable passage in the "Exhortation," prefixed by Erasmus to his edition of the Greek Testament. "I would," says the most renowned scholar of his age, "that all private women should read the Gospel and Paul's Epistles. And I wish that they were translated into all languages, that they may be read and known, not only by the Scotch and Irish, but also by the Turks and Saracens. Let it be that many would smile, yet some would receive it. I would that the husbandman at the plough would sing something from hence, that the weaver at his loom should sing something from hence, that the traveller might beguile the weariness of his journey by narrations of this kind." But before

he saw Erasmus, Tyndale appears to have been from his earliest years fired with the noble ambition of having the Bible translated into his mother tongue, as we gather from a passage in his work on the "Obedience of a Christian Man," where he argues that the English language adapts itself much more readily than Latin to Hebrew and Greek, and is therefore a more fitting and agreeable medium of translation. "Yea," he says, "and except my memory fail me, and I have forgotten what I read when I was a child, thou shalt find in the English chronicle how that King Adelstone (Athelstane) caused the Holy Scripture to be translated into the tongue that then was in England, and how the prelates exhorted him thereto." And in his preface to the Five Books of Moses he observes that "the sense of the Divine Word was obscured by expositions clean contrary unto the process, order, and meaning of the text, which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I had perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text."

In the little Church of St. Adeline adjoining the Manor House, Tyndale preached \* Sunday after Sunday to Sir John, his family,

\* Tyndale often preached at this time at various parts, as at Bristol, "in the common place called St. Austin's Green."

and tenants, and one of his hearers testifies that "when he read the Scriptures he proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly, and gently, much like unto the writing of John, the Evangelist, that it was a heavenly comfort to hear him." Tyndale found, however, that Sodbury Hall was not congenial for the task of translating the Bible, being so much molested by "unlearned priests," who had seen "no more Latin than only which they read in their portresses and missales," who gave up Sir John's good cheer rather than encounter "the sour sauce" of Master Tyndale's company, and who flocked together and railed against him in ale-houses, "which is their preaching place." Accordingly he took leave of the family of Walsh, who, he foresaw, would not be able to keep him "out of the hands of the spirituality," and after preaching for some time at St. Dunstan's, in the West, he sought for another retreat, where he might with safety carry on his work. "When I was so turmoiled," he says, "in the country where I was, that I could no longer there dwell, I this wise thought in myself: This I suffer because the priests of the country be unlearned. . . . As I this thought, the Bishop of London\* came to my remembrance, whom Erasmus. . . . praiseth exceedingly for his great learning. Then thought I, if I might come to this man's service I were happy. And so I got me to London, and through the acquaintance of my master came to Sir Harry Gifford, the King's grace's controller, and brought him an oration of Isocrates, which

\* Tunstal, who became Bishop of London in 1522.

I had translated out of Greek into English, and desired him to speak unto my lord of London for me, which he also did, as he showed me, and willed me to write an epistle to my lord, and to go to him myself, which I also did." Tyndale's hopes began to revive; he also knew one of the Bishop's officers, William Hebilthwayte, "a man of mine old acquaintance," but his high expectations were soon doomed to disappointment. Tyndale having made known his wishes, his Lordship replied, "Alas! my house is full; I have now more people than I can employ. If you will look well about London, you will not fail to meet with some suitable employment." Thus rebuffed, the Greek scholar took his departure, sad and desponding. "Alas!" he said, "I was deceived. . . . There is nothing to be looked for from the Bishops. . . . Christ was smitten on the cheek before the Bishop, Paul was buffeted before the Bishop. . . . and a Bishop has just turned me away." This depression did not last long; misfortune only kindled his enthusiasm, and brought out the magnanimity of his soul. "I hunger for the Word of God," said he; "I will translate it, whatever they may say or do; God will not suffer me to perish. He never made a mouth but he made food for it, nor a body but He made raiment also."

What a Bishop refused a layman granted. Humphrey Monmouth, a wealthy citizen and alderman, whose acquaintance Tyndale had made at St. Dunstan's, extended to him generous and timely aid by taking him into his

house for half a year; "and there," says Monmouth, in self-defence before the Privy Council in May, 1528, "he lived like a good priest, as me thought. He studied most part of the day and of the night at his book, and he would eat but sodden meat by his good will, nor drank but small, single beer; I never saw him wear linen about him in the space he was with me. I did promise him ten pounds sterling to pray for my father and mother, their souls, and all Christian souls; I did pay it to him when he made his exchange to Hamborough."

Under the hospitable roof of Monmouth he met the "pattern martyr" Fryth, his "dearly beloved brother." United like Luther and Melancthon, they held sweet converse together, and prepared themselves for the coming struggle. "I will consecrate my life wholly to the Church of Jesus Christ," said Fryth. "The people should know the Word of God," they both said. "The interpretation of the Gospel, without the interventions of Councils and Popes, is sufficient to create a saving faith in the heart." The translation of the New Testament engaged their attention, and everything was progressing favourably, when it was interrupted by an unforeseen occurrence.

Tunstal, instigated by Longland, the Bishop of Lincoln, began his reign of persecution. John Higgins, Henry Chambers, Thomas Eaglestone, a priest named Edmund Spilman, and some other Christians in London, used to meet and read portions of the Bible in English, and even asserted publicly that "Luther had more learn-

ing in his little finger than all the doctors in England." These rebels the Bishop ordered to be arrested, and by intimidation silenced them. Tyndale took warning. If reading the Scriptures be visited with imprisonment, and threatened with death, what fate awaits the translator of them? "And so," we read, "in London I abode almost a year, and marked the course of the world, and heard our preachers, and beheld the pomp of our prelates, and how busy they were, as they yet are, to set peace and unity in the world, though it be not possible for them that walk in darkness to continue long in peace; and saw things whereof I defer to speak at this time, and understood at the last, not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England."

Whither? His heart throbs; his eyes turn towards Germany; a vessel, loading for Hamburg, lies in the Thames; Monmouth gives him ten pounds for his journey, and others contribute a like sum, which he leaves with his benefactor as provision for future wants; then carrying his luggage on board, and taking leave of the few friends who have escorted him, he embarks, May, 1524, and sails across the ocean, exiled from his native land—never to return—but destined ere long to send back to his benighted countrymen the Gospel of light and peace.

Very little definite information of Tyndale's movements during the first year of his stay in Hamburg seems to have come down to us. It



is said that here he published the Gospels of Matthew and Mark; but the fact that this city did not then possess a printing-press disproves the statement. It is asserted, however, on good authority that Tyndale visited Luther at Wittenberg, and the separate editions of Matthew and Mark may have been printed there and conveyed to Monmouth as a first experiment when he sent for his promised "exhibition." Foxe says that "he took his journey into Germany and into Saxony, where he had conference with Luther and other learned men in these quarters;" and Sir Thomas More asserts that "Tyndale as soon as he got him hence, got him to Luther straight; that at the time of his translation of the New Testament he was with Luther at Wittenberg, and that the confederacy between him and Luther was well known." That Tyndale visited Luther at Wittenberg, "the common asylum of all apostates," we do not question, as there was nothing more probable than that he should like to see the leader of the German Reformation, but that there was any *confederacy* between him and Luther, Tyndale himself flatly denies. We quote his own words: "Moreover," he says, "I take God, which alone seeth the heart, to record to my conscience, beseeching him that my part be not in the blood of Christ, if I wrote, of all that I have written, throughout all my books, ought of an evil purpose of envy or malice to any man, or to stir up any false doctrine or opinion in the Church of Christ; or to be author of any sect; or to draw disciples

after me; or that I would be esteemed, or had in price above the least child that is born; save only of pity and compassion, I had, and yet have, on the blindness of my brethren, and to bring them into the knowledge of Christ; and to make every one of them, if it were possible, as perfect as an angel of heaven; and to weed out all that is not planted of our heavenly Father; and to bring down all that lifteth itself against the knowledge of the salvation that is in the blood of Christ." After this disclaimer we must dissociate the visit to Wittenberg from all imputations of Lutheranism. In 1525, probably in the summer, Tyndale left Hamburg for Cologne, then famous for its printing-presses. Roye, his amanuensis, accompanied him. His translation of the New Testament was now completed. It was made from the original Greek, and was entirely his own, notwithstanding many assertions to the contrary. His knowledge of Greek qualified him for the task, and his learning was acknowledged even by his adversaries. In his epilogue to the first edition he speaks thus: "Them that are learned Christianly I beseech, that of a pure intent, singly and faithfully have I interpreted it as far forth as God gave me the gift of knowledge and understanding, that the rudeness of the work now at the first time offend them not; but that they consider how that I had no man to counterfeit,\* neither was helped with English of any that had

\* Counterfeit here means to imitate, as in 1 Cor., iv. 16, "To counterfeit me;" Ephes., v. 1, "Be ye counterfeiters of God."

interpreted the same or such like thing in the Scripture beforetime. . . Count it as a thing not having his full shape, but as it were born before his time, even as a thing begun rather than finished. In time to come (if God have appointed us thereunto) we will give it his full shape, and put out, if ought be added superfluously ; and add to, if ought be overseen through negligence, and will enforce to bring to compendiousness that which is now translated at the length, and to give light where it is required, and to seek in certain places more proper English, and with a table to expound the words which are not commonly used." No one, after such an explicit statement, can doubt that he was unassisted in his translation. The work was issued from the printing establishment of Peter Quentel. Three thousand copies of this "Lutheran New Testament" were to be printed in quarto form with notes and marginal glosses, but, unfortunately, some of the workmen were addicted to drink. John Dobneck, better known as Cochlæus, a wily priest, who was living in exile at Cologne, plied them well with wine at his lodgings, and took part in their revels for the purpose of worming out of them the secrets of their craft. By this foul means Cochlæus soon learned from them the startling fact that a New English Testament was in the press, that ten sheets were already printed as far as the letter K (that is, probably a little beyond St. Matthew's Gospel), that English merchants were to bear the expense, and that the books were to be swiftly and safely conveyed to England

before King or Cardinal could be aware of the importation. On receiving the information Cochlæus lost no time in consulting Herman Rinck, a patrician and imperial councillor of Cologne, well known to Henry VIII. and to the Emperor Charles V. Rinck made full enquiry, and finding that the account was correct he appealed to the senate and obtained an interdict of the work. On this the "two English apostates," snatching away the printed sheets, made a hurried escape from Cologne, and went up the Rhine to Worms, where the people "were under the full rage of Lutheranism." Here Tyndale was safe; Luther had been before him, and Protestantism had planted on the battlements of the city the banner of freedom. Tyndale soon completed his work, bringing out his translation in octavo form, without note or comment. It was printed in 1525 by Schœffer, son of the associate of Faust and Gutenberg, the inventors of printing. With the exception of a brief epistle "To the Reader" at the end, the book contained nothing but the sacred text, the names of neither printer nor translator appearing on the title-page. Three thousand copies of it were issued, and these were soon followed by an equal number of the quarto edition, with marginal glosses and a preface. They were all shipped to England, but the news had gone before. Cochlæus had written to Henry and the Bishops, warning them of the danger at hand, and exhorting them to keep close watch on all the ports for the arrival of "that most pernicious merchandise." Cochlæus was not

the only one who gave notice of its coming. Lee, the King's almoner (afterwards Archbishop of York), while travelling through France, wrote to Henry in December, 1525, that "an Englishman at the solicitation and instance of Luther, with whom he is, hath translated the New Testament into English, and within few days intendeth to arrive with the same imprinted in England." The books arrived early in the year 1526, but notwithstanding the above notices, and the evident commotion caused, nothing seems to have been done to prevent their sale till the autumn, when a meeting of Bishops was held, whereat they condemned the book, and all in whose possession it should be found. An account of the proceedings of this Council is given in a poem by Roye, Tyndale's former companion, which contains "A brefe Dialogue betwene two prestes servauntes, named Watkyn and Jeffraye," a poem which "represents at least the popular opinion as to the parts played by the several actors." Our space precludes quotation.

Sir Thomas More attacked the translation most viciously, and Tunstal, besides issuing a prohibition, seized every opportunity to preach against it, declaring that he had found upwards of two thousand errors and heresies in it. Tyndale's reply to this charge was: "They have now so narrowly looked on my translation that there is not so much as one 'i' therein, if it lack a tittle over his head, but they have noted it, and numbered it unto the ignorant for an heresy." Moreover, so fierce was the Bishop's

indignation and determined his animosity that he visited Antwerp on his way to Cambrai in 1529, and entered into a secret compact with a merchant named Packington to buy up the volume, saying: "Gentle Master Packington, do your diligence and get them, and I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you, for the books are naughty, and I intend surely to destroy them all, and burn them at Paul's Cross." Even this extreme step furthered Tyndale's ends, for, at the interview with Packington, says he: "I shall gette moneye of him for these bokes to bryng myself out of debt, and the whole world shall cry out at the brunninge of God's worde, and the overplus of the moneye that shall remain to me shall make me more studious to correct againe and newly to imprint the same, and I trust the second will much better like you than ever did the first." "So," remarks the chronicler, Hall, who preserves this narrative, "forward went the bargain; the Bishop had the books, Packington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money." This fire took place before the gate of St. Paul's Cathedral on the 4th of May, 1530, and had "such a hateful appearance in it, being generally called a burning of the Word of God, that people from thence concluded there must be a visible contrariety between that book and the doctrines of those who handled it; by which both their prejudice against the clergy, and their desire of reading the New Testament, was increased." By the 21st of November the news had reached Rome. At that date Cardinal Campeggio wrote

to Cardinal Wolsey a letter of congratulation: "We lately heard, to his Majesty's great praise and glory, that he had most justly caused to be burned a copy of the Holy Bible, which had been mistranslated into the common tongue. . . . Assuredly no burnt offering could be more pleasing to Almighty God." Between 1525 and 1530 six editions of Tyndale's New Testament were printed, three of them at Antwerp, being surreptitious and containing many errors. It is probable that the six editions included not less than 18,000 copies, yet the demand was so great that they were all readily sold. The English hierarchy were furious. They used all the means in their power by seizure and purchase to obtain possession of the books,\* and so successful was the work of destruction that at the present time, of the quarto edition only a fragment is known to exist. It is in the Grenville collection of the British Museum. Of the octavo edition there are but two copies known, both imperfect (one in the Baptist College, Bristol, complete with the exception of the title-page; the other in the library of St. Paul's, London. The former was reprinted in 1836, with a valuable memoir of Tyndale, by G. Offor. It is a literal copy of the original, and has *facsimiles* of the woodcuts and ornaments. The appended epistle "To the Reader" is interesting.

"So great was the trouble of these times," says Foxe, "that it would overcharge any

\* For a detailed account of the search and persecution see Foxe's "Story of Thomas Garret, and things done in Oxford, reported by Antony Delaber."

story to recite the names of all them which, during these bitter days, either were driven out of the realm, or were cast out from their goods and houses, or brought to open shame by abjurations. Yet nevertheless, so mightily did the power of God's Gospel work in the hearts of good men, that the number of them did nothing lessen for all this violence and policy of the adversaries, but rather increased in such sort, as our story almost suffereth not to recite the particular names of all and singular, such as thus groaned under the persecution of those days."

And while his translation was being condemned in England, Tyndale was quietly pursuing his studies at Worms. The authorship of the obnoxious book was at first unknown, but the secret soon oozed out, for Wolsey, connecting Tyndale with the satire published by Roye against himself, was eager to lay hands on him. Tyndale now left Worms, and went to the quaint old town of Marburg, in Hesse Cassel, where he was soon afterwards joined by Fryth, who had escaped from England. This was probably in the year 1527. An account of the persecution raging in his native country was vividly portrayed to him by his companion, who had himself been imprisoned and forced to flee. But none of these things moved Tyndale to relax his energies or swerve from his noble purpose. Undaunted, he resolved to translate the Old Testament also. He remained at Marburg for about four years, and during his sojourn there



his chief controversial and doctrinal works were issued from the press of Hans Luft—as his “Parable of the Wicked Mammon” (1528); his “Treatise of the Obedience of a Christian Man” (1528); the “Practice of Prelates” (1530). Though the publication of these books engrossed much of his attention, he still went on with his translation of the Old Testament. It is to be regretted, indeed, that he did not wholly devote himself to this more useful task, instead of taking part in the controversial disputations of the time. Foxe’s statement as to his translation of the Pentateuch is as follows: “At what time Tyndale had translated the fifth book of Moses, called Deuteronomy, minding to print the same in Hamburg, he sailed thitherward, where, by the way, upon the coast of Holland, he suffered shipwreck, by which he lost all his books, writings and copies, and so was compelled to begin all again anew, to his hindrance and doubling of his labours. Thus having lost by that ship both money, his copies, and his time, he came in another ship to Hamburg, where at his appointment Master Coverdale tarried for him and helped him in the translating of the whole five books of Moses, from Easter till December, in the house of a worshipful widow, Mrs. Margaret Van Emmerson, A.D., 1529, a great sweating sickness being at the same time in the town. So having despatched his business at Hamburg, he returned to Antwerp again.” This narrative hardly coincides in every particular with the knowledge we have from other

sources and from Foxe himself, but the difference is slight, and in the main the account is correct. The Book of Genesis was "emprented at Malborow, in the land of Hesse, by me, Hans Luft," on 17th of January, 1530. It was soon followed by Deuteronomy, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, each published separately and having a distinct prologue. Genesis and Numbers are in black-letter, the others are in Roman letter. In the following year, 1531, the whole Pentateuch was published with a general preface. *This was the first portion of the Old Testament translated into English out of the original Hebrew.* In 1531 Tyndale also printed a separate version of the Book of Jonah. Of this production Sir Thomas More, with whom Tyndale had a sharp controversy, says contemptuously: "Then we have Jonas made out by Tyndale, a book that whoso delighteth therein shall stand in peril that Jonas was never so swallowed up by the whale, as by the delight of that book a man's soul may be swallowed up by the devil that he shall never have the grace to get out again." The prologue to Jonah was re-issued several times as in the Bible of 1549 and 1551, but the translation was not inserted by Matthew or Rogers in his Bible of 1537, though he used Tyndale's printed Pentateuch, and his version up to the end of Second Chronicles, which had been left in MS. The prologue is directed against prevailing errors, and boldly advocates the free and literal interpretation of Scripture. England is solemnly warned lest her fate should

resemble that of Nineveh. A *facsimile* of this work was reproduced in 1863 by Mr. Fry of Bristol.

In 1534 appeared the revised edition of the New Testament, "imprinted at Antwerp, by Marten Emperow." The title runs thus:—"The Newe Testament, dyligently corrected and compared with the Greke, by William Tyndale and fynessed in the yere of oure Lorde God, M.D. & xxx-iiii, in the moneth of November." Besides the New Testament this volume contained a translation of "The Epistles taken out of the Old Testament, which are read in the church, after the use of Salisbury, upon certain days of the year." These "Epistles" include 78 verses from the Pentateuch; 51 from I. Kings, Proverbs, and the Song of Solomon; 147 from the Prophetical Books (chiefly from Isaiah); and 43 from the Apocrypha (chiefly from Ecclesiasticus). It has short but terse and thoughtful marginal notes and prologues to the several books, and it is the first edition which bears the name of the translator. He also improved the style of the English, making it in many places more vigorous and idiomatic. In the preface he says:—"Here thou hast the New Testament or Covenant made wyth us of God in Christes bloude, which I have looked over agayne (now at the last) with all dyligence, and compared unto the Greke, and have wedded oute of it many fautes, which lacke of helpe at the begynninge and oversyght did soue therein." A copy of this edition, printed on vellum, and splendidly illuminated and bound, was presented

by Tyndale to Anne Boleyn, as a testimony of his gratitude for the protection she afforded one of his persecuted friends.\* In August, 1534, a corrupted edition of Tyndale's New Testament was published in Holland, edited by George Joye,† a native of Bedfordshire, a scholar of Cambridge, translator of the Psalms, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and "companion in tribulation." This spurious edition gave great dissatisfaction to Tyndale, and in November of the same year, when he issued his new and corrected version of the New Testament, he warned his readers against the careless and mutilated production of Joye, who "had not used the office of an honest man." "When the printing of mine was almost finished, one brought me a copy and showed me so many places in such wise altered that I was astonished, and wondered not a little what fury had driven him to make such change, and to call it a diligent correction."

We pass over in silence the sad account of Tyndale's betrayal while residing at Antwerp, in the house of his friend Thomas Poyntz, by a man named Phillips, who had been specially sent to Antwerp for that purpose by the King of England. In May, 1535, he was dragged away to the castle of Vilvorde, near Brussels, where he remained a prisoner for a year and a-half,

\* It is now in the library of the British Museum, and bears the simple legend—*Anna Regina Angliæ*. It is the edition of 1534, which is printed with such care and neatness in Bagster's "English Hexapla."

† One copy of Joye's work has been preserved, and is now in the British Museum.

carrying on discussions with the Doctors of the University of Louvain "in such sort, that they all had enough to do, and more than they could well wield, to answer the authorities and testimonies of the Scriptures, whereupon he most pithily grounded his doctrine." "Weeping," it is said, "must not hinder sowing," and Tyndale was not idle. "An idle life," says Goethe, "is death anticipated." During his confinement he busied himself with the work of translation and revision. In 1535 a new edition of his Testament, the last revised by himself, was published at Antwerp. It was without note or comment, but the changes and emendations are important. "Sometimes the changes are made to secure a closer accordance with the Greek, sometimes to gain a more vigorous or a more idiomatic rendering, sometimes to preserve a just uniformity, sometimes to introduce a new interpretation. The very minuteness of the changes is a singular testimony to the diligence with which Tyndale still laboured at his appointed work. Nothing seemed trifling to him, we may believe, if only he could better seize or convey to others the meaning of one fragment of Scripture."

Tyndale's work was finished, and his life was now fast drawing to a close. The efforts of his friends to save him were unavailing, and on Friday, October 6th, 1536, he was strangled and his body burned to ashes. His last words were—"Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

"And here," says Foxe, "to end and conclude this history with a few notes touching

his private behaviour in diet, study, and especially his charitable zeal and tender relieving of the poor: First, he was a man very frugal and spare of body, a great student, and earnest labourer, namely [especially] in the setting forth of the Scriptures of God. He reserved or hallowed to himself two days in the week, which he named his days of pastime, and those days were Monday, the first day in the week, and Saturday, the last day in the week. On the Monday he visited all such poor men and women as were fled out of England by reason of persecution into Antwerp; and those, well understanding their good exercises and qualities, he did very liberally comfort and relieve; and in like manner provided for the sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round about the town in Antwerp, seeking out every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell (as God knoweth there are many); and where he found any to be well occupied, and yet overburdened with children, or else were aged or weak, those also he plentifully relieved. . . . The rest of the days in the week he gave himself wholly to his book, wherein most diligently he travailed. When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber or other, whether came many other merchants; and unto them would he read some one parcel of Scripture either out of the Old Testament or out of the New. . . . He was a man without any spot or blemish of rancour or malice, full of mercy and com-

passion, so that no man living was able to reprove him of any kind of sin or crime; albeit his righteousness and justification depended not thereupon before God, but only upon the blood of Christ and his faith upon the same, in which faith constantly he died, as is said at Vilvorde, and now rested with the glorious company of Christ's martyrs blessedly in the Lord, who be blessed in all his saints. AMEN."

Tyndale's translation is the basis of the Authorised Version. His style is clear, terse, vigorous, homely, and idiomatic. There occur many unconventional and quaint renderings. Of the former class we have examples in the words "congregation," not church; "favour," not grace; "overseer," not bishop; "elder," not priest; "love," not charity. Of the latter class—the quaint—we have instances in Matt. iv., 2, "divers diseases and gripings;" vi., 7, "babe not moche;" xiv., 14, "his herte dyde melt uppon them;" xxvi., 17, "to eate the ester lamb;" Mark vi., 40, "sat doune, here arowe, and there arowe;" xiv., 66, "won off the wenches off the hyst preste;" xv., 16, "filled his bely with the coddess that the swyne ate;" Heb. xii., 16, "which for one breakfast solde his right;" 1 Tim. iii., 16, "without nay great is that mystery of godliness." To his translation, however, more than to any other, the Authorised Version is indebted for the happy renderings and melody which belong to it. "From first to last," as has been well said, "his style and his interpretation are his own; and

in the originality of Tyndale is included, in a large measure, the originality of our English Version. For not only did Tyndale contribute to it, directly, the substantial basis of half of the Old Testament (in all probability), and of the whole of the New, but he established a standard of Biblical translations which others followed. It is even of less moment that by far the greater part of his translation remains intact in our present Bibles, than that his spirit animates the whole." Again, it has been remarked, "Of the translation itself, though since that time it has been many times revised and altered, we may say that it is substantially the Bible with which we are all familiar. The peculiar genius—if such a word may be permitted—which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural grandeur, unequalled, unapproached in the attempted improvements of modern scholars, all are here, and bear the impress of the mind of one man—William Tyndale. Lying, while engaged in that great office, under the shadow of death, the sword above his head, and ready at any moment to fall, he worked, under circumstances alone perhaps truly worthy of the task which was laid upon him—his spirit, as it were divorced from the world, moved in a purer element than common air" His sole object was to place his readers in direct contact with the sacred writers, and he spared no pains to master thoroughly the Greek and Hebrew tongues. Even his enemies acknowledged his



proficiency in these languages. It is said that he was so complete a master of seven languages — Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French — that “you would fancy that whichsoever one he spoke in was his mother tongue.” And so thoroughly Saxon are his style and idiom that he has been named “a full-grown Wycliffe.” Besides, throughout all his translations there is the stamp of truthfulness. With the most entire sincerity he could say, “I call God to witness that I never altered one syllable of God’s Word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the world, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me.” Thus, in all his labours he sought for no other reward than the approval of conscience and the smile of God, and he bequeathed to us a rich inheritance — a *ktema es aei* — a possession for ever.

“His blood was shed  
In confirmation of the noblest claim,  
*Our* claim to feed upon immortal truth,  
To walk with God, to be divinely free,  
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.  
Yet few remember him. He lived unknown  
Till persecution dragged him into fame,  
And chased him up to heaven.”





## CHAPTER VI.

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### MILES COVERDALE.

MILES COVERDALE, Tyndale's successor, was born in the year 1488, in the district of Coverdale (hence his name), with its romantic abbey of Coverham, in Yorkshire. Of his early life little is known, though he has been described as "from his childhood given to learning, wherein he profited much." In his youth he was sent to the Augustine Monastery at Cambridge, at the head of which was Dr. Barnes, who was brought under the influence of the Gospel, and was led to espouse the reformed doctrines by Thomas Bilney. Coverdale soon imbibed the spirit of his master, for in a letter written in 1527, from the monastery to his friend and patron, Thomas Cromwell, afterwards Earl of Essex, he says: "Now I begin to taste of Holy Scriptures; now honour be to God! I am set to the most sweet smell of holy letters, with the godly savour of holy and ancient doctors, unto whose knowledge I cannot attain without diversity of books, as is not unknown to your most excellent wisdom. Nothing in the world I desire but books, as concerning my learning; they once had, I do not doubt, but Almighty

God shall perform that in me which He of His most plentiful favour and grace hath begun."

The habits of Cambridge men were different from what they are now. "There be divers there which rise," says Thomas Lever, in a sermon, 1550, "daily between four and five of the clock in the morning, and from five until six of the clock use common prayer, with an exhortation of God's Word, in a common chapel, and from six until ten of the clock use either private study or common lectures. At ten of the clock they go to dinner, whereat they be content with a penny piece of beef amongst four, having a few pottage made of the broth of the same beef, with salt and oatmeal, and nothing else. After this slender dinner they be either teaching or learning until five of the clock in the evening, when they have a supper, not much better than their dinner. Immediately after which they go either to reasoning in problems, or unto some other study, until it be nine or ten of the clock, and then, being without fire, are fain to walk or run up and down half an hour to get a heat in their feet when they go to bed."

While his old teacher, Dr. Barnes, was accused of heresy, and committed to the Fleet Prison, Coverdale, who attended him, was, probably through Cromwell's influence, untouched, and in the words of Bale, "while others dedicated themselves in part only, he gave himself wholly up to the preaching of the Gospel." Indeed, so powerful was his opposition to the old doctrines that some converts, when arrested

and examined by Tunstal, laid the blame on Sir\* Miles Coverdale, and an Augustine friar, when examined in 1528, confessed that after having heard him preach, "his mind was sore withdrawn from the blessed Sacrament, insomuch that he took it but for the remembrance of Christ's body." In 1529, no doubt for personal safety, Coverdale left England for the Continent, where he may have met Tyndale at Hamburg, as Foxe asserts, but even then he could have given the great Reformer little assistance in his translation of the Old Testament, on account of his ignorance of Hebrew. From this date till 1534 we lose sight of Coverdale.

At home the times were fraught with eventful issues. In 1529, Wolsey, suspected of insincerity in the affair of Henry's divorce, was disgraced and stript of all his wealth and power, and bade "a long farewell to all his greatness." Soon after he died exclaiming, in these memorable words: "Had I but served my God as I have served my King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs." The Great Seal was given to Sir Thomas More. In 1531 the King extorted from Parliament the confession that he was the protector and the supreme head of the Church and Clergy of England; shortly after the authority of the Pope is formally annulled, and Henry becomes the new Pope. In 1533 the King

\* Latin, *Dominus*, originally applied to those who had taken the degree of B.A., often given to chaplains, and then as a complimentary title. Those with M.A. degree were styled Master, *Magister*.

married Anne Boleyn, who was favourable to the Reformation, and who appointed Hugh Latimer as one of her chaplains, and in the same year Dr. Thomas Cranmer, on the death of Warham, was created Archbishop of Canterbury. Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More were indicted for high treason, because they refused to acknowledge the King's supremacy, were tried, condemned, and beheaded (June 22, and July 6, 1535 respectively).

During this short period the fortunes of the English Bible were not less striking and eventful. In 1526 Tyndale's New Testament was proscribed by Tunstal and Warham. In 1529 the King issued a proclamation against heretical books, and amongst these Tyndale's writings (including his New Testament) were specially named. In 1530, after a conference of twelve days, an assembly of learned divines issued another proclamation "against great errors and pestilent heresies, with all the books containing the same with the translation also of Scripture corrupted by William Tyndale, as well as in the Old Testament as in the New, and all other books in English containing such errors." In a "Bill in English to be published by the preachers," we read: "Finally, it appeared that having of the whole Scripture is not necessary to Christian men; and like as the having of the Scripture in the vulgar tongue and in the common people's hands hath been by the holy Fathers of the Church in some times thought meet and convenient, so at another time it hath been thought not expedient to be communicate amongst them.

Wherein, forasmuch as the King's Highness, by the advice and deliberation of his council, and the agreement of great learned men, thinketh in his conscience that the divulging of this Scripture at this time in the English tongue, to be committed to the people, should rather be to the farther confusion and destruction than the edification of their souls. And it was thought there in that assembly, to all and singular in that congregation, that the King's Highness and the Prelates in so doing, not suffering the Scripture to be divulged and communicate to the people in the English tongue at this time, doth well. 'And I also think' (was the preacher to say) 'and judge the same; exhorting and moving you, that in consideration His Highness did there openly say and protest that he would cause the New Testament to be by learned men faithfully and purely translated into the English tongue, to the intent he might have it in his hands ready to be given to his people, as he might see their manners and behaviour meet, apt, and convenient to receive the same.'"

On the 1st of December, 1530, Latimer wrote to the King an epistle of great earnestness and fidelity, and boldly reminded him of his promise. We cite the following passages therefrom:—

"How little do they fear the terrible judgment of Almighty God! And specially they which boast themselves to be guides and captains unto others, and challenge unto themselves the knowledge of Holy Scripture,"

yet will neither show the truth themselves (as they be bound), neither suffer them that would. . . . And they will, as much as in them lieth, debar, not only the Word of God, which David calleth 'a light to direct,' and show every man how to order his affections and lusts according to the commandments of God, but also by their subtile wiliness they instruct, move, and provoke in a manner all Kings in Christendom, to aid, succour, and help them in this their mischief. And especially in this your realm they have so blinded your liege people and subjects with their laws, customs, ceremonies, and barbarous glosses, and punished them with cursings, excommunications, and other corruptions (corrections I would say). And now, at the last, when they see that they cannot prevail against the open truth (which the more it is persecuted, the more it increaseth by their tyranny) they have made it treason to your noble Grace to have the Scripture in English.

"This, most gracious King, when I considered, and also your favourable and gentle nature, I was bold to write this rude, homely, and simple letter unto your Grace, trusting that you will accept my true and faithful mind even as it is.

"And they whose works be naught dare not come to this light, but go about to stop it and hinder it, letting as much as they may that the Holy Scriptures should not be read in our mother tongue, saying that it would cause heresy and insurrection; and so they persuade, at the least way they would fain persuade, your

Grace to keep it back. . . . But as concerning this matter, other men have showed your Grace their minds how necessary it is to have the Scripture in English. The which thing also your Grace hath promised by your last proclamation: the which promise I pray God that your gracious Highness may shortly perform, even to-day, before to-morrow. Nor let the wickedness of these worldly men detain you from your godly purpose and promise.

"And take heed whose counsels your Grace doth take in this matter, that you may do that God commandeth, and not that seemeth good in your own sight without the Word of God; that your Grace may be found acceptable in His sight, and one of the members of His Church; and, according to the office that He hath called your Grace unto, you may be found a faithful minister of His gifts, and not a defender of His faith, for he will not have it defended by man or man's power, but by His Word only, by the which he hath evermore defended it, and that by a way far above man's power or reason, as all the stories of the Bible make mention.

"Wherefore, gracious King, remember yourself; have pity upon your soul; and think that the day is even at hand when you shall give account of your office, and of the blood which hath been shed with your sword. . . . The Spirit of God preserve your Grace!"

Soon afterwards (1533) Cranmer was raised to the Primacy, and everything seemed now favourable to a further attempt at translating the Bible. Accordingly we find that in the



Chapter-House of Old St. Paul's, on the 19th of December, 1534, Cranmer was instrumental in gaining the consent of the Convocation that "His Majesty would vouchsafe to decree that the sacred Scriptures should be translated into the English tongue by certain honest and learned men, named for that purpose by His Majesty, and should be delivered to the people according to their learning." What was done will be noticed subsequently. In the meantime Coverdale, who probably heard what was going on in England, was making preparations for a version of the whole Bible. Where he was, and what exactly he did until 1534, is not apparent. In the edition of his Bible published in 1550 he states: "for which cause, according *as I was desired, anno 1534*, I took the same upon me to set forth the special translation, not as a checker, not as a reprover or despiser of other men's translations." This indicates to us how his time was being spent in his seclusion, and as the harvest springs from seed which germinates in darkness, so his translation issued unostentatiously from its concealment in 1535. In the preface he says: "Considering how excellent knowledge and learning an interpreter of Scripture ought to have in the tongues, and pondering also mine own insufficiency therein, and how weak I am to perform the office of a translator, I was the more loath to meddle with this work. Notwithstanding, when I considered what great pity it was that we should want it so long, and called to my remembrance the adversity of them

who were not only of ripe knowledge, but would also, with all their hearts, have performed that they had begun, if they had not had impediment" (he alludes here to Tyndale, then in prison); "considering, I say, that by reason of their adversity it could not so soon have been brought to an end as our most prosperous nation could fain have had it; these and other reasonable causes considered, I was the more bold to take it in hand."

The name and place of the printer are still under dispute, but the probability is that it was printed by Froschover of Zurich, who printed the edition of 1550. The two larger sizes of letters in the Bible are found in his other works; but the water-marks in the leaves of these works differ from those found in the Bible. Mr. Stevens is of the opinion that the volume was printed at Antwerp at the cost of Jacob Van Meteren, who, in a curious passage relative to Emanuel Van Meteren, author of the History of Belgium (1614), is represented as being zealously engaged in producing a translation of the Bible "for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ in England," "and for this purpose he employed a certain learned scholar named Miles Coverdale."

Coverdale's Bible was the first complete English Bible ever printed. But the work was not original. Coverdale was not qualified for such a task; his knowledge of Hebrew was limited, and, in point of scholarship, his version has no authoritative weight. The translation, however, has merits of its own. He states

with simple honesty, in his dedication to the King — "I have, with a clearly conscience, purely and faithfully translated this out of five sundry interpreters." These were probably (1) the German version of Luther, (2) the Vulgate, (3) the Latin version of Pagninus, (4) the Swiss-German of Leo Juda, published at Zurich 1325-29; (5) the English Pentateuch, Book of Jonah, and New Testament of Tyndale.\*

The title-page is bordered by woodcuts representing events in sacred history, King Henry VIII. being depicted at the foot as receiving the Bible from the Bishops and nobles kneeling before him. The title of the Book is as follows: "Biblia—the Bible, that is, the Holy Scripture of the Olde and New Testament faithfully and truly translated out of Douche and Latyn in to Englishe. MDXXXV. S. Paul, ii Tessa iii., Praie for us, that the worde of God maie have fre passage, and be glorified, &c. S. Paul, Col. iii. Let the worde of Christ dwell in you plenteously in all wysdome, &c. Josue i., Let not the boke of this lawe departe out of thy mouth, but exerceyse thyselfe therein daye and nighte, &c." This Bible is known as the Holkham Bible, belonging to the Earl of Leicester, of Holkham Hall, and is considered to be a perfect copy of *the original book as it came from an Antwerp press*, in 1535. Though dedicated to the King, the work appeared without express license, and being "imprinted beyond the sea,"

\* There were besides the Biblia Sacra of Ruellius, with marginal renderings, Cologne, 1527; also, a Dutch and German version.

it lay under the bann of the Convocation of 1534, but it was not suppressed, and it had unquestionably the sanction and patronage of Cromwell and Cranmer.

After the Bible had been in circulation it was thought prudent to print a new title-page and prologue, to render it more acceptable to the people. The new title-page was not so honest as the old one, for it made no mention of the sources of the version, and it merely said, "faythfully translated into Englysche," printed in black-letter, and dated 1536. There is a copy of this Bible at Castle Ashby, the property of the Marquis of Northampton. In the dedication to the King there is an allusion to his "dearest first wife and most virtuous Princess Queen Anne."

In 1536 an injunction was issued by Cromwell to the effect—"That every parson or proprietary of any parish within this realm shall on this side of the feast of St. Peter, *ad vincula* (Aug. 1), next coming, provide a book of the whole Bible in Latin, and also in English, and lay the same in the quire for every man that will to look and read therein." Coverdale's was the only English Bible then extant, and consequently it may be regarded as the *first authorised version*.

In 1537 a second and third edition "overseen and corrected" was issued, "Imprynted in Southwarke for James Nycolson." At the foot of the title-page are these important words, "Sett forth with the King's most gracious license," the name of Queen Jane, who was married to Henry VIII., May 20, 1536, being

substituted for that of Queen Anne in the dedication. The book was well received, and it is to this edition that the following statement of Coverdale relates, recorded on the testimony of Fulke: "After it was finished, and presented to King Henry VIII. of famous memory, and by him committed to divers bishops of that time to peruse, of which I remember Stephen Gardiner was one, after they had kept it long in their hands, and the King was divers times sued unto for the publication thereof, at the last, being called for by the King himself, they re-delivered the book, and being demanded by the King what they thought of the translation, they answered 'That there were many faults therein.' 'Well,' said the King, 'but are there any heresies maintained thereby?' They answered that 'There were no heresies that they could find.' 'If there be no heresies,' said the King, 'then in God's name let it go abroad among our people.'"

Coverdale next published a translation of the New Testament, with the Vulgate in parallel columns. Three editions of this Diglott Testament were issued in 1538, the first by James Nycolson, with a dedication to the King and a preface to the reader, but it was so "negligently corrected" during Coverdale's absence in Paris that he disowned it as "base, insensible, and clean contrary, not only to the phrase of our language, but from the understanding." "Weeding out the faults," he superintended a new edition in Paris, printed by Francis Regnault, and published by Grafton & Whitechurch, with a dedication to "Crumwell, Lord Privy Seal and

Viceregent to the King's Highness." In spite of his remonstrance, Nycolson printed another edition, "faithfully translated by John Hollybushe." The English is really Coverdale's, and is, in fact, a reprint of his first edition. Who John Hollybushe was no one seems to know. It is supposed that Coverdale had quarrelled with Nycolson, and that the printer issued this book on his own account.

Coverdale's Bible is divided into six parts. The first contains the Pentateuch; the second, the historical books from Joshua to Esther (or, as it is here written, Hester), Ezra and Nehemiah being denominated 1 and 2 Esdras; the third, Job, the Psalter, the "Proverbs of Salomon," the "Preacher of Salomon," and "Salomon's Balettes;" the fourth embraces the prophetical books, Baruch (with the Epistle of Jeremy), finding a place before Ezekiel, but in a note at the end we read that the book "is not in the canon of the Hebrew," and a later notice explains that Baruch belongs to the Apocrypha. The fifth part contains the Apocryphal Books, the Prayer of Manasses being omitted; the sixth consists of the New Testament arranged in the same order as in Luther's and Tyndale's Testaments, but placed in three groups:—(1) The Gospels and Acts; (2) The Epistles of St. Paul; (3) The Epistles of St. Peter and St. John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, and the Revelation. No part has any preface, with the exception of the fifth, containing the Apocrypha; but at the commencement of the volume there is, as we have seen, a

dedication to the King, which is followed by a prologue to the Christian reader.

Coverdale, as compared with Tyndale, has a strong tendency to use ecclesiastical terms taken freely from the Vulgate, such as "penance," "confess," "priest." The Greek *ecclesia*, however, he uniformly renders "congregation" (never "church") in his New Testament.

Style of expression is also more attended to than accurate rendering, and many of his felicitous phrases are retained in the Authorised Version.

There are also many quaint and antique renderings as, Gen. viii., 11, "And she bare it (an olive leaf) in her nebb;" Joshua ii., 11, "Our hert hath failed us, neither is there a good stomacke in eny man;" Ps. cxix., 70, "Their herte is as fat as brawn;" Luke x., 40, "Martha made her self moch to do;" 1st Cor., ii., 1, "I came not with hye words."

Obsolete terms sometimes occur, as "to clyp" (to shear a sheep); a "maund" (a large basket); "symnel" (a cake); "to spar" (to bar the door).

The most interesting portion of the work is the Psalter. Its language is smooth, flowing, and often remarkable for beauty and tenderness. "My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. They shall perish, but

Thou shalt endure; they all shall wax old, as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." The Prayer-Book Psalter retained in the English Church is in essence the Psalter of Coverdale's Bible. At the end of the Psalms is given a note on Sela: "In the Psalter this worde Sela cometh very oft, and (after the mynde of the interpreters) it is asmoche to saye as, allwaye, continually, for ever, forsoyth, verily, a lifynge up of the voyce, or to make a pause, and earnestly to consider, and to ponder the sentence." But such terms as Maschil or Michtam, and the title Song of Degrees are omitted by him. In Acts xxvii., "syrtes" (quicksands) are explained as "perilous places in the see;" and in Titus i. 12, Epimenides is given as the name of the "own prophet." There are in all twenty-three of these explanatory notes.

Coverdale's subsequent days are easily summed up. In 1540 (the year Thomas Cromwell died on the scaffold) he appears to have left England for Germany, and was an exile there for eight years, during which he ministered to a small flock at Bergzabern, near Strasburg. On his return home he was appointed one of the chaplains to Edward VI. In 1551 he was made Bishop of Exeter, which office he held for two years, being deprived of it by Queen Mary. After a second exile for three years, he returned to England, was appointed to the living of St. Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge; but either from the infirmity of advancing years, or in con-



sequence of his strong puritanical ideas, he retained it only two years. He died in February, 1569, after a long life of industry, devotion, and integrity.





## CHAPTER VII.

### "MATTHEW'S BIBLE"—JOHN ROGERS, RICHARD TAVERNER.

ABOUT two years after the publication of Coverdale's version, another folio volume of Scripture appeared, with the following title: "The Bible, which is all the holy Scriptures, in which are containyd the Olde and Newe Testaments truely and purely translated into Englysh by Thomas Matthew. Essaye 1. Hearken to ye Heavens, and thou earth geave eare: for the Lorde speaketh, MDXXXVII." At the bottom of the page, in large red letters, we read, "Set forth with the Kinges most gracyous lycence."

The dedication to the King bears the signature of Thomas Matthew, the fictitious name assumed by John Rogers, whose initials I. R. are subscribed to a brief "Exhortacyon to the studye of the holy Scripture," and the volume is consequently known as "Matthew's Bible."

The other initials R. G. and E. W. on the blank page opposite Isaiah represent Richard Grafton and Edward Whitechurch, the London printers, at whose expense the volume was printed, but where and by whom we do not know. W. T. at the end of the Old Testament mean William Tyndale. Foxe relates that a

packet of papers was sent by the martyr, on the morning of his execution, to his friend Poyntz; and it is supposed they included MSS. of a translation of the Old Testament, carried on beyond the Pentateuch.

John Rogers was born about 1500, in the neighbourhood of Birmingham. He was educated at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, taking his degree of B.A. in 1525. Foxe says of his academic career, "he profitably travailed in good learning." He was chosen the same year a junior Canon in Christ Church, Oxford, then known as "Cardinal College." He next became Rector of the Church of the Holy Trinity, or Trinity the Less, in London, and in 1534 he left England for Antwerp, where he officiated as Chaplain to the Merchant Adventurers, an old guild or corporation, originally called "Merchants of St. Thomas à Becket." Foxe relates that here Rogers chanced "to fall in company with that worthy martyr of God, William Tyndale, and with Miles Coverdale, which both for the hatred they bare to Popish superstition and idolatry, and love they bare toward true religion, had forsaken their native country. In conferring with them the Scriptures, he came to great knowledge in the Gospel of God, insomuch that he cast off the heavy yoke of Popery, perceiving it to be impure and filthy idolatry, and joined himself with them two in that painful and most profitable labour of translating the Bible into the English tongue, which is entitled, 'The Translation of Thomas Matthew.'" Rogers' intimacy with Tyndale must have been of short

duration, as Tyndale's death occurred on the 6th of October, 1536. In 1537 Rogers married Adriana Pratt or de Weyden,\* "more richly endowed with virtue and soberness of life than with worldly treasures." After his marriage he removed to Wittenberg, where he remained until 1547, ministering to a congregation there. On his return to England he received many marks of favour during the short reign of Edward VI. His high position and personal worth marked him out as an easy prey to the persecution that ensued in the next reign, and in 1555 he was burned alive at Smithfield. Rogers was the first martyr in Queen Mary's day, of whom we may truly say: "If they had not been flesh and blood they *could* not have been burnt, and if they had been no more flesh and blood they *would* not have been burnt."

Matthew's Bible is a "composite" production. Tyndale is followed in the Pentateuch; from Ezra to Malachi we have Coverdale's text, with slight alterations, as is also the case with the Apocrypha; but from Joshua to 2 Chronicles the translation is different from both, and it has been identified by eminent scholars in substance as the posthumous work of William Tyndale. There are numerous notes appended, especially to the Psalms.

As soon as the work was completed Grafton and Whitechurch, who embarked £500 sterling—a sum equal to £7,000 of the present currency—upon the undertaking, presented a copy to Cranmer, who in turn forwarded it to Cromwell,

\* Both names signify *meadow*.

now in the zenith of his power. "I understand," says the Archbishop in a letter to the Minister of State, "that your lordship, at my request, hath not only exhibited the Bible which I sent unto you to the King's Majesty, but also hath obtained of his grace that the same shall be allowed, by his authority, to be bought and read within this realm." The royal proclamation was in the following terms:—

"Whereas it hath pleased the King's Majesty, and most dread Sovereign, and supreme head under God of this Church of England, for a declaration of the great zeal he beareth to the setting forth of God's Word, and to the virtuous maintenance of the Commonwealth, to permit and command the Bible, being translated into our mother tongue, to be sincerely taught by us the curates, and to be openly laid forth in every parish church: to the intent that all his good subjects, as well by reading thereof, as by hearing the true explanation of the same, may be able to learn their duties to Almighty God and His Majesty, and every of us charitably to use other: and then applying themselves to do according to that they shall hear and learn, may both speak and do Christianly; and in all things as it beseemeth Christian men: because His Highness very much desireth, . . . that you use the most high benefit quietly and charitably every one of you, to the edifying of himself, his wife, and family, in all things answering to His Highness' good opinion conceived of you, in the advancement of virtue and suppressing of vice; without failing to use such

discreet quietness and sober moderation in the premises as is aforesaid; as you tender his grace's pleasure, and intend to avoid his high indignation, and the peril and danger that may ensue to you and every of you for the contrary."

Richard Taverner published a revised edition of Matthew's Bible in 1539. It was printed at the sign of the "Sun," in Fleet Street, by Byddell & Bartlett. Taverner was born at Brisley, Norfolk, in 1505; was educated at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge; and, after a year and a half, studied at Cardinal College, Oxford. About 1530, being M.A. in both Universities, he "went to an inn of Chancery, near London, and thence to the Inner Temple, where his humour was to quote the law in Greek when he read anything thereof." He next attached himself to Cromwell, through whose influence he was made, in 1537, a Clerk of the Signet to the King. Two years afterwards appeared his edition of the Bible. In his dedication to the King, he remarks: "This one thing I dare well affirm, that amongst all your Majesty's deservings. . . your Highness never did thing more acceptable unto God, more profitable to the advancement of true Christianity, more unpleasant to the enemies of the same, and also to your grace's enemies, than when your Majesty licensed and willed the most sacred Bible containing the unspotted and lively Word of God to be in the English tongue set forth to your Highness' subjects. . . . Wherefore, the premises well considered, forasmuch as the printers hereof were very desirous

to have the Bible come forth as faultless, and emendably as the shortness of time for the recognizing of the same would require, they desired me, for default of a better learned, diligently to overlook and peruse the whole copy, and in any case I should find any notable default that needed correction, to amend the same, according to the true exemplars, which thing according to my talent I have gladly done."

The volume was published both in folio and in quarto, and in the same year his New Testament was issued in folio and in quarto also. His version was favourably received, and was allowed to be publicly read in Churches. Another edition of the New Testament (somewhat altered) appeared in 1540 in 12mo., and another of the Old Testament in 1551.

After the fall of Cromwell, 1540, Taverner was for a short time committed to the Tower, but was soon released, on account of his musical attainments, and restored to royal favour. In 1552 Edward VI. granted him a special license to preach, and we are told that he sometimes preached before the King dressed in a damask gown, velvet bonnet or round cap, a gold chain round his neck, and with a sword by his side. During Mary's reign he lived in seclusion, but on the accession of Elizabeth to the throne he resumed his preaching, and was afterwards made High Sheriff of the County of Oxford. Fuller, the Church historian, preserves a specimen of his preaching. Addressing the students of the University, he began his sermon with these

words: "Arriving at the Mount of St. Mary's, in the stony stage where I now stand, I have brought you some fine biscuits, baked in the oven of charity, and carefully conserved for the chickens of the Church, the sparrows of the Spirit, and the sweet swallows of salvation." "Surely," adds Fuller, "preaching now ran very low," but we must not forget that Taverner was a layman, and that the style of the period was often marred by quaint conceits. He died in the year 1575.

Taverner's Bible bears many marks of scholarship. There are no woodcuts, and but few notes. He gives no preface to the Apocrypha, and omits the name of St. Paul in the title of the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews. Copies of his Bible may be seen in the libraries of the British Museum, St. Paul's, and of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.







## CHAPTER VIII.

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### THE GREAT BIBLE.

WE have now reached the publication of the Great Bible, so called from its size. The way in which the work was prepared, and the parties who originally planned and executed it, remain matters of doubt. Some say Rogers took a prominent part in it. It seems, however, that Cromwell was the prime mover and patron of the undertaking; and that Coverdale, acting under his directions, was selected as editor, and Grafton as printer; and that it was commenced early in the year 1538. Paris was chosen as the place of printing, because the best paper and typography were to be procured there. A Royal license was obtained from the King of France (Francis I.) on condition that they did not print "private or unlawful opinions," and that all dues, obligations, &c., were properly discharged. The two Englishmen, with Regnault, the French printer, applied themselves assiduously to their work. On the 23rd June, 1538, they wrote to Cromwell informing him of the progress they were making in the enterprise, in which he was deeply interested:—"We be entered into *your*

work of the Bible, whereof (according to our most bounden duty) we have here sent unto your Lordship, and the second in paper, whereof all the rest shall be made." They also unfold their plan:—"We follow not only a standing text of the Hebrew, with the interpretation of the Chaldee and the Greek, but we set also in a private (separate) table the diversity of readings of all texts, with such annotations in another table as shall doubtless delucidate and clear the same; as well without any singularity of opinions, as all checkings and reproofs." Coverdale may at this time have acquired some knowledge of the Oriental languages, or he may have secured the services of scholars; but even without such assistance he might have effectively carried out his plan by consulting the "Complutensian Polyglott," which contains a Latin translation of the Chaldee Paraphrase, and the accurate and literal version of the Old Testament by Sebastian Münster, which was published at Basle in 1534-5. Before the printing of the volume was completed the license was withdrawn, and the sheets seized and condemned to the flames by the ecclesiastical authorities. This occurred on the 17th December, 1538. Many were actually burned, but a considerable number ("four great dry vats-full") which had been sold to a haberdasher "to lap caps in," were afterwards recovered. Happily, before the seizure portions had been sent to Cromwell through Bonner, the Bishop of Hereford, then the English Ambassador at Paris; and in a

short time the workmen, presses, type, and paper were brought over to London, where the Great Bible was published in April, 1539.

The book is a handsome folio, printed in black-letter, with this title:—"The Byble in Englysche, that is to saye the content of all the holy scripture bothe of the olde and newe testament, truly translated after the veryte of the Hebrue and Greke textes, by the dylygent studye of dyverse excellent learned men, expert in the forsayde tongues. Prynted by Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch. *Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.* 1539."

The title-page, designed by Hans Holbein, is artistic and interesting. At the top of the engraving is the Saviour in the clouds of heaven. Two scrolls contain His words: the one towards the right hand being, *Verbum meum quod egredietur de ore meo non revertetur ad me vacuum, sed faciet quæcunque volui* (Esa. lv., 11); and that towards the left being, *Inveni virum secundum cor meum, qui faciet omnes voluntates meas.* (Acts xiii., 22). Below the Lord Jesus is the King on his throne, with his crown and insignia of the Garter laid in the dust, and holding in each hand a book entitled, *Verbum Dei*. The King presents the book to Cranmer and some clergy on the right hand, and to Cromwell and some laymen on the left. To the former he says, *Hæc præcipe et doce* ("These things command and teach," 1 Tim., iv., 11); to the latter, *Quod justum est, judicate. Ita parvum audietis ut magnum* ("Judge righteously. Ye shall hear the small as well as

the great," Deut. i., 16-17); another heavy scroll is handed to Cromwell with the following inscription: *A me constitutum est decretum, ut in universo imperio et regno meo homines tremiscant et paveant Deum viventem* ("I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble before the living God," Daniel vi., 26). Lower down, on the right, Cromwell is depicted again delivering the Word of God to the laity and addressing them in the words of Ps. xxxiv., 14, *Diuerto a malo et fac bonum, inquire pacem et persequere eam* ("Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it"). On the other side is Cranmer, easily distinguished by his official costume and his coat-of-arms, giving the sacred volume to the eager clergy with the solemn injunction, *Pascite, qui in vobis est, gregem Dei* ("Feed the flock of God which is among you," 1 Peter, v., 2). In one corner stands a preacher, enforcing the duty of prayer and thanksgiving on behalf of Kings (1 Tim., ii., 1). The congregation shout in reply, some *Vivat Rex!* and some, including females, "God save the Kynge!" Prisoners look out from grated windows, while the multitude outside salute them derisively with many a *Vivat Rex!* as a reward of their disloyalty. That the precious volume was regarded as a gift from God is clearly indicated by the colophon: *A Domino factum est istud* ("This is the Lord's doing").

The Great Bible is sometimes erroneously termed Cranmer's Bible. Cranmer's connection with the book began with the second

edition, whose preface he wrote, but the issuing of the first is due entirely to Cromwell. It has no notes, not even a dedication, and is based on the text of Matthew's Bible, or, in other words, is a revision of Coverdale's own version of 1535 and of Tyndale's. Certain documents, containing injunctions to the clergy, are preserved:—"Item, that ye shall provide on this side the Feast of ——— next coming, one boke of the whole Bible in the largest volume in English, and the same set up in some convenient place within the said church that ye have cure of, whereat your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same and read it; the charges of which boke shall be equally borne between the parson and the parishioners aforesaid, that is to say, the one half by you, and the other half by them." This clearly refers to the Great Bible. Its pages are fully fifteen inches in length, and over nine in breadth.

The volume was enthusiastically welcomed by the people, and what Strype says of the Bible in 1538 may, with equal propriety, be applied to the reception accorded that of 1539. "It was wonderful to see with what joy this book of God was received, not only among the learned sort, and those that were noted for lovers of the Reformation, but generally all England over, among all the vulgar and common people; and with what greediness God's Word was read; and what resort to places where the reading of it was. Everybody that could bought the book, or busily read it, or got

others to read it to them, if they could not themselves; and divers more elderly people learned to read on purpose. And even little boys flocked among the rest to hear portions of the Holy Scripture read." The number of editions that were printed proves the accuracy of these statements. A second edition, printed in London, appeared in April, 1540, and on its title-page mention is made of Cranmer's prologue; a third edition was published in July, and a fourth in November of the same year. Three more were issued in 1541. These six editions all have Cranmer's prologue, but the third and fourth bear the names of Tunstal and Heath upon the title-page, who are said to have "overseen and perused" the translation at the King's command. The first edition consisted of 2,500 copies, and the impressions of the later editions were not likely to be fewer.

Many copies of the Great Bible have been preserved: the British Museum contains several editions, and St. John's College, Cambridge, has a splendid copy, printed on vellum and illuminated; another copy on vellum (April 1540), presented by Anthony Marler, a haberdasher in London, to Henry VIII., is to be found in the British Museum.

But the storm was lowering. Cromwell was gone, Cranmer had not the same influence over the King, and Henry soon displayed his enmity against the Bible. In 1543 Parliament passed an act forbidding the use of Tyndale's translation, and commanding that the annotations and preambles in all other Bibles should

be destroyed; nor was any one belonging to the class of apprentices, artificers, journeymen, servants, husbandmen, and labourers, to be permitted to read the Old or New Testament to themselves or to any other, privately or openly, on pain of one month's imprisonment.

Meanwhile, the King's life was fast ebbing. Shortly before his death he desired that Cranmer should be sent for; but before the Prelate arrived he was speechless, and squeezing Cranmer's hand he immediately expired, 28th of January, 1547. People now breathed more freely, and the Word had free course for a season.

On the Sabbath after the funeral young Edward VI. was crowned, amid courtly splendour, in the Abbey of Westminster. When the royal insignia were presented to him, and he saw the swords, the symbol of his being the head of three kingdoms, he asked for a fourth. To an inquiry what his Majesty meant, he replied, "The Bible. That book is the sword of the Spirit, and to be preferred before these swords. That ought, in all right, to govern us, who use them for the people's safety by God's appointment. Without that sword we are nothing, we can do nothing, we have no power; from that we are what we are this day; from that we receive whatsoever it is that we at this present do assume. He that rules without it is not to be called God's minister or a King. Under that we ought to live, to fight, to govern the people, and to perform all our affairs. From that alone we obtain all power and virtue,

grace, and salvation, and whatsoever we have of Divine strength." This augured well; the reading of the Bible was free to all, and it is computed that about fifty editions of the Scriptures issued from the press during Edward's short reign of six years and a-half, but no new translation was undertaken.

Edward died on the 6th July, 1553, and was succeeded by his elder sister Mary. One of her first acts was to prohibit the general use of the Scriptures, and the reading of them in the Churches. Her reign is a dark page in English history, full of bigotry and cruelty. The English Bible, even in effigy, could not now be tolerated. When Philip and Mary passed in procession through the metropolis, the citizens in their exuberance of joy and loyalty exhibited a picture of Henry VIII., with a sword in one hand, and in the other the Word of God, which he was giving to his son Edward. The unlucky artist was at once brought before Bishop Gardyner, the Chancellor, who rebuked him severely, calling him "villain and traitor," and ordered him to efface the book and paint a glove in its stead—in doing which, as the story goes, the terrified artist "wiped away a portion of the fingers withal." Perhaps nothing, next to the general circulation of the Bible, has tended ever since to strengthen the cause of Protestantism more than the history of the martyrs in Queen Mary's reign—their blood became the seed of the Church. As has been beautifully said—"Tyndale, who gave us our first New Testa-



ment from the Greek, was strangled for his work at Vilforde; Coverdale, who gave us our first printed Bible, narrowly escaped the stake by exile; Rogers, to whom we owe the newly-formed basis of our present Version, was the first victim of the Marian persecution; Cranmer, who has left us our Psalter, was at last blessed with a death of triumphant agony. The work was crowned by martyrdom, and the workmen laboured at it in the faith and with the love of martyrs."





## CHAPTER IX.

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### THE GENEVAN VERSION.

GENEVA, the citadel of civil and religious liberty, is situated on the shores of Lake Lemman, encircled with lofty mountains, and was the home of Calvin and Beza, who, by their eloquence and learning, shed lustre on that fair city. Thither many of England's noblest sons resorted, driven by persecution from their native land, and found a refuge where they could worship God without fear, and according to the dictates of their conscience. Their first place of settlement was, however, Frankfort; but, differing from their brethren there on the question of clerical vestments, they removed to Geneva. To this little band of exiles is due a new Version of the Bible. Among them were John Knox, our great Reformer; Miles Coverdale, who has already come under our notice; John Pullain, a translator of Ecclesiastes, Esther, and other books of Scripture, into English verse; Thomas Cole, Dean of Salisbury; Christopher Goodman, author of a treatise against "the monstrous regiment" (government) of women, afterwards a leader of the extreme Nonconformists; and Anthony Gilby, Thomas Sampson, and William Whittingham, with whom we are mainly concerned.

Of Gilby we know little. He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, left Frankfort for Geneva, and on the accession of Elizabeth returned to England, and was appointed vicar of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. He died in 1584.

Sampson was Dean of Chichester. On the accession of Mary he fled to Strasburg, and afterwards joined his compatriots at Geneva. In 1561 he became Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, which office he retained for a short time only, being deprived of it for nonconformity.

Whittingham was born in 1524, in the Parish of Lanchester, near Durham. He became a Commoner of Brasenose, Oxford, about 1540, and five years afterwards a Fellow of All Souls. He was chosen one of the senior students of Christ Church, spent about twelve years travelling in France, returned to his native land, but soon left it, with many others, and arrived at Frankfort on the 27th of June, 1554. Towards the end of 1555 he went to Geneva, where he married Catherine, the sister of John Calvin. When Knox left Geneva, in 1559, Whittingham was ordained his successor to the pastorate of the English Church. On the accession of Elizabeth he returned to England, and in 1563 was made Dean of Durham. Whittingham contributed several Psalms to the metrical version that went by the names of Sternhold and Hopkins. He died in 1579.

Geneva was at that time especially adapted for the successful accomplishment of a new translation. It was the centre of Biblical learn-

ing; Calvin and Beza were engaged in a critical revision of Olivetan's French Bible; Gallars and Beza were also preparing a revised Italian version. Robert Stephen, who had already distinguished himself in Paris as a scholar and editor, was then an exile in Geneva, where, in 1551, he published his famous Greek Testament side by side with the Vulgate and the Latin of Erasmus. Before leaving Paris he had printed two editions of the Hebrew Bible, to one of which was attached the Commentary of David Kimchi on the Minor Prophets. Other aids were at hand to the Genevan exiles. Leo Juda's Latin version of the Old Testament was completed by Bibliander and Pelican, and printed at Zurich in 1543; a revised edition of Erasmus' translation was added to it in 1544; Beza's Latin version of the New Testament was printed in 1556; Castalio's Latin version was published at Basle in 1551, and his French version in 1555. Circumstances, therefore, favoured the undertaking of translating the English Bible at Geneva.

In the year 1557 a small octavo volume was published, entitled—"The Newe Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, conferred diligently with the Greke and best approved translations—with the arguments as wel before the chapters, as for every boke and epistle; also diversities of readings, and moste profitable annotations of all harde places: whereunto is added a copious table. At Geneva, printed by Conrad Badius, MDLVII." The title-page also contains a curious woodcut, representing Time

with wings, scythe, and hour-glass, helping Truth out of her grave, with the motto—"God by Tyme restoreth Truth, and maketh her victorious." After the table of contents is given "The Epistle, declaring that Christ is the end of the law, by John Calvin." The following is a specimen of the Reformer's eloquence:—"For this is life everlasting, to know our only true God, and Him whom He hath sent, Jesus Christ, in whom He hath appointed the beginning, midst, and end of our salvation. This is Isaac, the well-beloved son of the Father, which was offered in sacrifice, and yet gave not place to death. This is the vigilant Shepherd, Jacob, which had so great care over the sheep which he had in keeping. This is the good and merciful Brother, Joseph, who, in his glory, was not ashamed to acknowledge his brethren, were they never so base and abject. This is the great High Priest and Bishop, Melchisedec, who made an everlasting sacrifice once for all. This is the excellent Law-maker, Moses, who writeth His law in the tables of our hearts by his Spirit. This is the faithful Captain and Guide, Joshua, to conduct us into the land of promise. This is the noble and victorious King, David, smiting down with his hand all rebellious power. This is the magnificent and triumphing King, Solomon, governing his kingdom in peace and prosperity. This is the strong and valiant Samson, who by His death overthrew all His enemies. And last of all, every good thing which heart can think or desire is found in this only Jesus Christ. For He humbled

himself to exalt us; He became servant to make us free; He was impoverished to enrich us; He was sold to ransom us; He became prisoner to bail us; He was condemned to deliver us; He was made the curse for our blessing, and offering for sin for our righteousness; He was disfigured to fashion us; He died for our life. Insomuch that by Him roughness is smoothed, anger appeased, darkness lightened, unrighteousness justified, weakness strengthened, discomfort comforted, sin bridled, despite contemned, fear boldened, debt paid, labour eased, sadness made glad, mishap goodhap, hardness easiness, disorder ordered, division united, ignominy made noble, rebellion subdued, menacing menaced, ambush discovered, assaults assailed, violence oppressed, battle beaten, war foughten, vengeance punished, torment tormented, damnation damned, depth drowned, hell chained, death dead, mortality immortal, and, to be short, mercy hath swallowed all misery, and bounty hath overcome all evil."

This preface is followed by an address to the reader, giving an account of the work. The writer uses the first personal pronoun throughout, and shews that the translation is from his own hand. After describing the various kinds of men in the Church of Christ, and speaking especially of the "simple lambs which partly are already in the fold of Christ, and partly wandering astray by ignorance," he proceeds to say, "To this kind of people in this translation I chiefly had respect, as moved with zeal, counselled by the godly, and drawn by occasion

both of the place where God hath appointed us to dwell, and also of the store of heavenly learning and judgment which so aboundeth in this city of Geneva, that justly it may be called the pattern and mirror of true religion and godliness."

Whittingham is regarded as the translator of this work. It is not a new translation. Tyndale's version is the basis of the Genevan. Stephen's Greek Testament was the original text used, and Beza's Latin translation suggested many emendations, but there are not wanting signs of independent judgment on each word and passage. Indeed, in a few cases, Beza's rendering was followed in preference to that of Tyndale, though the latter was right; thus, in Luke ii., 22, Tyndale reads "their," the Genevan, "her;" in Gal. iv., 17, Tyndale reads "you," the Genevan, "us." Still Whittingham's version was thorough, and on the whole judicious. He was faithful to the Greek, and expressed the sense, for the most part, in terse and idiomatic English. The New Testament was published on the 10th of June, 1557. The expense was defrayed mainly by John Bodley, the father of the founder of the Bodleian library. It was the first New Testament in which the text was divided into separated verses. The verses, which had originated with Robert Stephen a few years previously, had only been marked on the margin of his Greek Testament of 1551. Words also which had no equivalents in the original, but required to complete the sense, were printed in italics. Brief explanatory

notes are introduced in the margin, and have in many cases a strong doctrinal bias towards the Calvinistic school. Regarding the annotations, the writer says he "omitted nothing unexpounded whereby he that is anything exercised in the Scriptures of God might justly complain of hardness: and also . . . I have explicate all such places by the best learned interpreters as either were falsely expounded by some, or else absurdly applied by others." The book is a specimen of good printing and paper, and found its way soon afterwards to England. In 1576 it was edited by Lawrence Tomson, Under-Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham, and a linguist of no mean order.

Immediately on the publication of the New Testament, the translation of the Old was commenced, and went on without intermission for "two years and more, day and night." Whittingham's coadjutors were Thomas Sampson and Anthony Gilby, John Bodley, and probably Miles Coverdale, and John Knox. The Great Bible was adopted as the basis, but its text was revised with great care, and brought into closer correspondence with the Hebrew. In those books originally translated by Tyndale (Genesis — 2 Chron.), the text is not much changed, but in the poetical and prophetic books the variations are so numerous that it may almost be considered a new translation. It is much more literal, and at the same time more forcible, than its predecessors. The New Testament was again revised, and the whole was completed and published in one volume (quarto) in



1560, with the following title:—"The Bible: that is, the Holy Scriptures, conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament. Translated according to the Ebrue and Greke, and conferred with the best translations in divers languages, with moste profitable annotations upon all the harde places, and other things of great importance, as may appeare in the Epistle to the Reader. At Geneva: Printed by Rowland Hall, MDLX." The work was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth.

The Genevan Version is often called the "Breeches Bible," from its rendering of Gen. iii., 7—"They sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves breeches." It is superior to any version that preceded it, and stands next to the Authorised Version. It was very popular with the Puritans of England and the Presbyterians of Scotland. It may be added that it was the first English Bible printed in Roman type, all previous to it having been in black-letter. It was also the first which had its text divided into verses.





## CHAPTER X.

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### THE BISHOPS' BIBLE.

THE accession of Queen Elizabeth was hailed by multitudes of her subjects, who vied with each other in giving her a proof of their loyalty and love. As she was passing the "Little Conduit in Cheape," an old man appeared with scythe and wings, representing Father "Time," and his Daughter "Truth," who held in her hand the *Verbum Veritatis*—an English Bible, which she presented to Her Majesty. "As soon as she received it she kissed it, and with both her hands held it up, and then laid it upon her breast, greatly thanking the city for that present, and said she would often read over that book." And as one of the crowd shouted out "Remember old King Harry the Eighth," a gleam of light passed over her face. Lord Bacon also records that, just before her coronation, a petition was presented to her to release "four or five prisoners unjustly detained in prison," meaning the four Evangelists and the Apostle Paul, and that she answered very gravely, "That it was first best to enquire of them whether they would be set at liberty or no." By this prudent though

evasive answer, the Queen escaped alarming all at once the partizans of the Romish faith, to which creed many of her counsellors belonged, but not long afterwards she proclaimed an edict containing the following injunctions:—"To provide within three months after this visitation at the charges of the parish, one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume in English, and within twelve months the paraphrases of Erasmus, also in English; and the same to be set up in some convenient place within the said church, where the parishioners may most conveniently resort and read the same. All persons under the degree of A.M. shall buy for their own use the New Testament in Latin and English, with paraphrases, within three months. Inquiry was to be made whether any parsons, vicars, or curates, did discourage any person from reading any part of the Bible, either in Latin or English."

Though the "largest volume"—the Great Bible—thus obtained royal sanction, the Genevan Version continued to be the favourite with the people, being loved for itself and its history, yet despite Her Majesty granting John Bodley a patent for seven years to print the same, no new edition of the Genevan Testament or Bible appeared until the year 1575, possibly on account of the restrictions of Archbishop Parker and Grundal, Bishop of London, that "they would take such order with the party in writing, under his hand, that no impression should pass but by their direction, consent, and advice."

The strong flavour of Calvinistic theology permeating the notes appended to the Genevan Version was offensive to the Bishops, whilst, on the other hand, its manifest superiority as a translation to the Great Bible made it impossible for them to adopt the latter. A natural desire, therefore, arose for a new translation, which would excel all rivals, and be acceptable to all sects and classes of the nation. Archbishop Parker undertook to produce that new version. His plan was similar to that projected by Cranmer in 1542. He divided the Bible into a number of sections, and portioned them out for translation or revision among a select few of his brethren eminent for their learning and piety. Each one, on completing the section assigned to him, was to return it to the Archbishop for final revision and approval. The rules to be observed are set down in a letter addressed on the 5th of October, 1568, by Parker to Cecil, who received at the same time from the Archbishop a copy of the finished work to be presented to the Queen. "First, to follow the common English translation used in the churches, and not to recede from it, but where it varieth manifestly from the Hebrew or Greek original. Item, to use sections and divisions in the text, as Pagnine in his translation useth, and for the verity of the Hebrew to follow the said Pagnine and Münster specially, and generally others learned in the tongues. Item, to make no bitter notes upon any text, or yet to set down any determination in places of controversy. Item, to note such chapters

and places as contain matter of genealogies, or other such places not edifying with some strike or note, that the reader may eschew them in his public reading. Item, that all such words as sound in the old translation to any offence of lightness or obscenity, be expressed with more convenient terms and phrases."

The names of the actual workers cannot be definitely ascertained, as the list enclosed in Parker's letter to Cecil unfortunately does not tally with the initials at the end of some of the books, but it seems that fifteen persons, if not more, took part in the undertaking, and from the fact that the majority of them were Bishops, the version was styled the "Bishops' Bible."

M. C., at the end of Exodus, point to Archbishop Parker, who also translated 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Philemon, and Hebrews.

W. E., at the end of the Pentateuch, refer to William Exoniensis, or William Alley, Bishop of Exeter.

R. M., at the close of the Second Book of Samuel, are the initials of Ricardus Menevensis, or Richard Davies, Bishop of St. David's.

E. W., at the end of 2 Chronicles, indicate Edwin Wigornensis, or Edwin Sandys, Bishop of Worcester.

A. P. C., at the end of Job, point to Andrew Pearson, Canon of Canterbury.

T. B., at the end of the Psalms, probably refer to Thomas Becon, a well-known author. This portion was first sent to Guest, Bishop of Rochester.

A. P. C., at the end of Proverbs, are supposed to refer to Andrew Pearson, the translator of Job.

A. P. E., at the end of Ecclesiastes and Canticles, indicate Andrew Perne, Canon of Ely,

R. W., at the conclusion of Lamentations, denote Robert Horne, Bishop of Winchester.

T. C. L., at the end of Daniel, are the initials of Thomas Bentham, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield.

E. L., refer to Edmund Grindal, Bishop of London, who translated the Minor Prophets.

J. N., at the end of the Apocrypha, indicate John Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich.

R. E., at the end of Acts, denote Richard Cox, Bishop of Ely.

R. E., at the end of the Epistle to the Romans, which, according to Strype, should be E. R., refer to Edmund Guest, Bishop of Rochester.

G. G., at the end of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, point to Gabriel Goodman, Dean of Westminster.

The remaining books of the New Testament are without initials.

The Bible made its public appearance in folio with the simple title—"The Holy Bible, containing the Old Testament and the New: The New Testament of our Saviour Jesus Christ. 1568. Richard Jugge. Cum Privilegio Regiæ Majestatis." It has no dedication. In the centre of the title-page is a portrait of the Queen, and portraits of the Earl of Leicester and Cecil (Lord Burleigh) are found at the commencement of Joshua and the Psalms. At the

end of the volume is the device of the pelican feeding her young with her blood, symbolic of the Saviour's love, and under it the words, "*Matris ut hæc proprio stirps est satiata cruore, Pascis item proprio, Christe, cruore tuos.*" Prefixed to the work we find a sum of the whole Scripture, tables of genealogy and contents, woodcuts, and maps, and other miscellaneous matter. There are also two prefaces, one for the Old Testament, and one for the New, both from the pen of Archbishop Parker, and full of noble thoughts. "While this eternal Word of God be our rock and anchor to stick unto, we will have patience with all the vain inventions of men, who labour so highly to magnify their tongues, to exalt themselves above all that is God. We will take comfort by the Holy Scriptures against the maledictions of the adversaries, and doubt not to nourish our hope continually therewith, so to live and die in this comfortable hope, and doubt not to pertain to the elect number of Christ's Church, how far soever we be excommunicated out of the synagogue of such who suppose themselves to be the universal lords of all the world—lords of our faith and conscience at pleasure."

A second edition, in a small quarto volume, appeared in 1569; a third of the Bible and an edition of the New Testament followed in 1570, 1571. On the 3rd of April, 1571, Convocation ordered that every Archbishop and Bishop should have at his house a copy of the Holy Bible of the largest volume, "to be placed

in the hall or the large dining-room, that it might be useful to their servants or to strangers;" also that a copy should be placed in every cathedral, and, as far as possible, in every Parish Church.

As might be expected from the number of translators engaged, the work is not of uniform excellence. The Greek scholarship of the New Testament, on the whole, is superior to the Hebrew scholarship of the Old. Gueste in returning the Book of Psalms, which Becon translated in his stead, hopes that the Archbishop will excuse his "rude handling of the Psalms." "Where in the New Testament one piece of a Psalm is reported, I translate it in the Psalm according to the translation thereof in the New Testament, for the avoiding of the offence that may rise to the people upon diverse translations."

The basis of the Bishops' Bible is the Great Bible; ready-made improvements are frequently set aside; the marginal notes are less numerous than in the Genevan Version, and in the New Testament are often taken from the latter; in the Apocryphal Books the annotations are scanty, as in the Genevan Version. Archaic terms occur—Gen. xxxii, 25, "He smote him upon the hucklebone of his thigh." Isaiah lxvi, 3, "He that killeth a sheep for me knetcheth a dog (margin, that is, cutteth off a dogge's necke)."

This Bible has been sometimes nicknamed the "*Treacle Bible*," from Jeremiah viii. 22, where we read, "Is there no tryacle in Gilead?"



Copies of the Bishops' Bible are to be seen in the British Museum, and in the libraries of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

So overjoyed was Parker at the completion of the work that he broke forth in the exultant words of Simeon—"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."





## CHAPTER XI.

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### THE RHEIMS AND DOUAI VERSION.

THE Romish Church discountenances the reading of the Scriptures. "We do not encourage the people to read them, we do not spread them to the utmost among them. Certainly not." Nor is she less tolerant of vernacular translations. "The Church would have God's Word not to be written commonly in any other tongue than in one of those three sanctified tongues," Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as the inscription on the Cross. The last is a quotation from a Douai divine. As the Roman Catholics, however, had charged the various Protestant Versions with gross errors and misrepresentations of the Word of God, they were bound to substantiate their statements by producing an immaculate translation of their own under the sanction and fostering care of their Holy Mother Church. Agreeably to this notion, in 1582, a Popish Version of the New Testament was published at Rheims, with the title: "The New Testament of Jesus Christ, translated faithfully into English, out of the authentical Latin, according to the best corrected copies of the same, diligently conferred with the Greeke and other

editions in divers languages: with arguments of booke:es and chapters, annotations, and other necessarie helpes, for the better understanding of the text, and specially for the discoverie of the corruptions of divers late translations, and for cleering the controversies in religion of these daies: IN THE ENGLISH COLLEGE OF RHEMES. Psal. 118, 'Da mihi intellectum, et scrutabor legem tuam, et custodiam illam in toto corde meo,' that is, 'Give me understanding, and I wil searche thy law and wil keepe it with my whole hart.' S. Aug., tract 2 in Epist. Joan, 'Omnia quae in Scripturis sanctis, ad instructionem et salutem nostram, intente oportet audire; maxime memoriae commendanda sunt quae adversus hereticos valent plurimum: quorum insidiae, infirmiores quosque et negligentiores circumvenire non cessant;' that is, 'Al things that are readde in Holy Scriptures we must heare with great attention, to our instruction and salvation, but those things specially must be commended to memorie, which make most against Heretikes: whose deceites cease not to circumvent and beguile al the weaker sort and the more negligent persons.' Printed at Rhemes, by John Fogny. 1582. Cum Privilegio."

This elaborate title-page gives the key-note to the whole work. Its preface and marginal notes are polemical, one-sided, and manifestly unjust. Its authors were certain English refugees at Rheims—William Allen, Gregory Martin, Richard Bristow, and Thomas Worthington, being the chief.

William Allen was Principal of St. Mary's

Hall, Oxford, and Canon of York, in Queen Mary's reign. On the accession of Elizabeth he left England for Louvain, was made a Doctor of Divinity, a Canon of Cambray, and afterwards of Rheims, where, by his assiduity and learning, he established the Popish seminary for English students. In 1587 he was made Cardinal by Pope Sixtus V., and consecrated Archbishop of Mechlin, and is said to have been designated Primate of England and the Legate of Rome had the Spanish Armada been successful. He did all in his power to foment troubles in this country during the reign of Elizabeth, whom he branded as "a caitiff under God's and Holy Church's curse, given up to a reprobate mind, therefore her open enormities and her secret sins must be great and not numerable."

Gregory Martin had been a scholar of St. John's, Oxford, and M.A. in 1564. In 1570 he passed over to Douai, and then became Divinity reader in the English Seminary of Rheims. Wood speaks of him as "an excellent linguist, exactly read and versed in the Sacred Scriptures, and went beyond all of his time in humane literature." He was the principal translator, and wrote an appendix to the Version, entitled "A Discovery of the Manifold Corruptions of the Holy Scriptures by the Heretics of our Days," which called forth an able reply from Dr. William Fulke, Master of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1583. Martin died in 1584, a victim to excessive study.

Richard Bristow, M.A., of Christ's Church, Oxford, and Fellow of Exeter College, became

reader of Divinity at Douai, and afterwards at Rheims, where he prepared the notes of the New Testament.

Thomas Worthington studied at Oxford, went to Douai, and thence to Rheims, where he became President of the College. He is said to have prepared the annotations and tables of the Old Testament.

The text which they followed was not the Greek, nor the Latin Version of Jerome, but the "old vulgar Latin" used in the Church for ages, and, in the opinion of the Rhemish translators, "not only better than all other Latin translations, but than the Greek text itself in those places where they disagree."

As regards the translation, there are many barbarous expressions and erroneous renderings. A few examples will suffice to verify these statements. *Azymes, Pasche, neophyte, odible, contristate, prefinition, coinquination, scenopegia, obsecration*, are some of the *sesquipedalia verba*. "And adored the top of his rod" (Heb. xi., 21); "And I gave her time that she might do penance" (Rev. ii., 21); "And white stoles were given, to every one of them one" (Rev. vi., 11); "And he exinanited himself" (Phi. ii., 7); "You are evacuated from Christ" (Gal. v., 4); "Against the rectors of the world of this darkness, against the spirituals of wickedness in the celestials" (Eph. vi., 12); "Obey your Prelates, and be subject to them" (Heb. xiii., 17); "Purge the old leaven, that you may be a new paste, as you are azymes. For our Pasche, Christ, is immolated" (1st Cor., v., 7), are

specimens of the application of the rule they laid down, "not to mollify the speech, but to keep it word for word."

In 1610 a Version of the Old Testament, similar in character to the New, was published at Douai.

There is much that is left untranslated, and as Thomas Fuller says it is "a translation needing to be translated." In justice to it there are, however, many correct and felicitous renderings: "Holiness of the truth" (Eph. iv., 24); "Our lamps are going out" (Matt. xxv., 8); "You are not come to a palpable mountain" (Heb. xii., 18); and in the first chapter of St. James we owe to the Rhemish Version such phrases as "upbraideth not" (v. 5.), "nothing doubting" (v. 6.), "the engrafted word" (v. 21), "bridleth not" (v. 26).

Dr. Eadie relates the following anecdote: "The Rheims Testament was once appealed to and rejected in tragic circumstances. On the evening before her execution, in Fotheringay Castle, the unfortunate Queen of Scots, laying her hand solemnly on a copy that happened to be on her work-table, took a solemn oath of innocence, when the Earl of Kent at once interposed that the book on which she had sworn was false, and that her oath, therefore, was of no value. Her answer was prompt and decided: 'Does your lordship suppose that my oath would be better if I swore on your translation, in which I do not believe?'"

In fine, one great object the promoters had in view was to disseminate Popish doctrines by

comments which have been well described as "a mass of bigotry, sophistry, and unfairness."

From the year 1560 to 1603 there were 130 distinct issues of the Bible and Testament, 90 of which were of the Genevan text. An open Bible was the basis of the Reformation.





## CHAPTER XII.

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### THE AUTHORISED VERSION, 1611.

JAMES I. succeeded Elizabeth, March, 1603. His journey from Scotland to take possession of the English Crown was marked by a lavish distribution of honours, and on his way through the "Land of Promise" there was presented to him the celebrated "Millenary Petition," signed by some hundreds of Puritans "groaning under a common burden of human rites and ceremonies." The King, by no means averse to act as Moderator and display his controversial gifts, soon after enjoined a meeting to be held for the hearing and determining "things pretended to be amiss in the Church." This Conference took place on the 14th, 16th, and 18th of January, 1604, at Hampton Court. The Puritans were headed by the learned Dr. Reynolds, "most excellent in all tongues, of a sharp and nimble wit, of mature judgment, and so well seen in all arts and sciences as if he had spent his whole time in each of them."

In the course of the second day, Dr. Reynolds "moved his Majesty that there be a new translation of the Bible, because those which were allowed in the reign of King Henry VIII. and Edward VI. were corrupt, and not answerable to the truth of the original. For example, first,



Gal. iv., 25, the Greek word *sustoichei* is not well translated, as now it is; *bordereth* neither expressing the force of the word, nor the Apostle's sense, nor the situation of the place. Secondly, Ps. cv., 28, 'They were not obedient,' the original being, 'They were not disobedient.' Thirdly, Ps. cvi., 30, 'Then stood up Phinees and prayed;' the Hebrew hath 'executed judgment.'" Bancroft, the Bishop of London, who was as sour as the King was facetious, curtly remarked that "if every man's humour should be followed, there would be no end of translating." James, however, sided with the Puritans, objecting at the same time to notes being appended, and to Reynolds is due the origin of our "Authorised Version," as it is commonly called.

On the 22nd of July, 1604, the King wrote to Bancroft, then Archbishop of Canterbury, vacant by the death of Whitgift, stating that he had appointed 54 learned men for the translating of the Bible, divers of whom had no ecclesiastical preferment, and the main object of the letter is to enjoin upon Bancroft and the Bishops that whenever a living of £20 per annum was vacant they should inform his Majesty of it, that he might commend to the patron one of the said translators as a fitting person to hold it, as his reward for his service in the translation. "Furthermore, we require you to move all our Bishops to inform themselves of all such learned men within their several dioceses, as having special skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, having taken pains in their private studies of the Scriptures, for the clearing of any obscurities

either in the Hebrew or in the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistaking in the former English translation, which we have now commanded to be thoroughly viewed and amended; and thereupon, to write unto them, earnestly charging them, and signifying our pleasure therein, that they send such their observations either to Mr. Lively, our Hebrew reader in Oxford, or to Dr. Andrewes, Dean of Westminster, to be imparted to the rest of their several companies; that so our said intended translation may have the help and furtherance of all our principal learned men within this our kingdom." In compliance with the King's command, Bancroft wrote to the Bishops, and here ended all the trouble, so far as history records, that James I. ever took respecting the Version which bears his name. Only 47 of those appointed took part in the work, and they were men not more eminent for learning than for piety. "Of these scholars," says Westcott, "Many (as Andrewes, Overall, Saville, and Reynolds) have obtained an enduring reputation apart from this common work in which they were associated. Others, whose names are less familiar, were distinguished for special acquirements requisite for their task. Lively, Spalding, King, and Byng were successively professors of Hebrew at Cambridge, and Harding and Kilbye at Oxford. Harmer and Perin were professors of Greek at Oxford, and Downes at Cambridge; Bedwell was the most distinguished Arabic scholar of the time. Saravia was an accomplished modern linguist. Thompson (Camb.), Chatterton, Smith, and Boys

were equally distinguished for their knowledge of ancient languages." Andrewes was a perfect prodigy, and might have been "interpreter general at Babel." "The world wanted learning to know how learned this man was."

The Revisers divided themselves into six companies, two of which met at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge. The Presidents, companies, and arrangement of books were as follows:—*Westminster*. 1. Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, Dean of Westminster, afterwards successively Bishop of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. To this company, ten in number, were assigned the books of Genesis to 2 Kings. 2. Dr. William Barlow, Dean of Chester, afterwards Bishop of Rochester and Lincoln. This company numbered seven in all, and revised Romans to Jude. *Oxford*. 1. Dr. John Harding, Regius Professor of Hebrew, afterwards President of Magdalen College. This company consisted of seven men, and revised Isaiah to Malachi. 2. Dr. Thomas Ravis, Dean of Christ Church, afterwards successively Bishop of Gloucester and London. In this company were Dr. Peryn, Professor of Greek; Dr. Harmer, ex-Professor; and five others. To it were assigned, Matthew to Acts, and the Book of Revelation. *Cambridge*. 1. Edward Lively, Regius Professor of Hebrew. He died in 1605. His place was probably taken by Dr. Spalding, who succeeded him in the Professorship. To this company, eight in number, were assigned 1 Chronicles to Ecclesiastes. 2. Dr. John Duport, Master of Jesus College. In this company was John Bois, Prebendary of Ely,

“a precocious Greek and Hebrew scholar;” to it was assigned the Apocrypha. Certain portions of Scripture were allotted to each person for translation; corrections and improvements were made by the company at their general meeting; and the whole Bible was finally revised by six members at London.

The following instructions were supplied to each company:—

“1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops’ Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

“2. The names of the prophets and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained, as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used.

“3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word ‘church,’ not to be translated ‘congregation.’

“4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of faith.

“5. The division of the chapters to be altered, either not at all, or as little as may be if necessity so require.

“6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

“7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit references of one Scripture to another.

" 8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and, having translated or amended them severally, by himself, where he thinks good, all to meet together, to confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

" 9. As any one company hath despatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his Majesty is very careful in this point.

" 10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, to note the places, and therewithal to send their reasons; to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.

" 11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed, by authority, to send to any learned in the land for his judgment of such a place.

" 12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand, and to move and charge as many as being skilful in the tongues, and having taken pains in that kind; to send his particular observations to the company either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

" 13. The directors in each company to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester for that place, and the King's professors in the Hebrew or Greek in either University.

"14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible; Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, Geneva.

"15. Besides the said directors before mentioned, three or four of the most ancient and grave divines in either of the Universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the Vice-Chancellor upon conference with the rest of the Heads to be overseers of the translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the fourth rule above specified."

Their labours extended over seven years, from 1604 to 1611. "Never was a great enterprise like the production of our Authorised Version carried out with less knowledge handed down to posterity of the labourers, their method and order of working." Selden, in his "Table Talk," gives the following short account:—"The translation in King James' time took an excellent way. That part of the Bible was given to him who was most excellent in such a tongue (as the Apocrypha to Andrew Downs), and then they met together, and one read the translation, the rest holding in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues, or French, Spanish, Italian, &c. If they found any fault, they spoke; if not, he read on."

The Bible, printed in black-letter, was issued in 1611, under the title:—

"The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament and the New. Newly translated out of the Originall tongues: and with the former Translations, diligently compared and

revised by His Majesty's Speciall Commandement. Appointed to be read in Churches. Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty. Anno Dom. 1611."

It is difficult to understand what is meant by the phrase on the title-page, "Appointed to be read in Churches." We give the opinion of Canon Westcott on this point:—"No evidence," he says, "has yet been produced to show that the Version was ever publicly sanctioned by Convocation or by Parliament, or by the Privy Council, or by the King. It gained its currency, partly, it may have been, by the weight of the King's name, partly by the personal authority of the prelates and scholars who had been engaged upon it, but still by its own intrinsic superiority over its rivals. Copies of the 'whole Bible of the largest volume and latest edition,' are required to lie in churches by the Visitation Articles of Laud, 1622 (St. David's), 1628 (London). In the Scotch Canons of 1636 it is said still more distinctly that 'the Bible shall be of the translation of King James' (Cap. 16, sec. 1) . . . The printing of the Bishops' Bible was at once stayed when the new Version was definitely undertaken. No edition is given in the lists later than 1606, though the New Testament from it was reprinted as late as 1618 (or 1619). So far ecclesiastical influence naturally reached. But it was otherwise with the Genevan Version, which was chiefly confined to private use. This competed with the King's Bible for many years, and it was not till about the middle of the century that it was finally displaced."

The dedication is fulsome in praise of the King, who is styled "Most High and Mighty Prince," and described as succeeding the "bright occidental star," Queen Elizabeth, and as "the sun in his strength dispelling supposed and surmised mists."

The address to the reader (now, unfortunately, rarely met with in any edition) is a masterpiece of composition, abounding in quaint expressions, lofty thoughts, and holy sentiments. It is from the pen of Dr. Miles Smith, who, along with Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, prepared the manuscripts of the entire work for the press, and corrected the proof-sheets. Dr. Smith was a profound scholar, and had "Hebrew at his fingers'-ends." In his preface he says:—"Truly we never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make a bad one a good one; but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against—that hath been our endeavour, that our mark . . . Neither did we run over the work with that posting haste that the Septuagint did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finished it in seventy-two days; neither were we barred or hindered from going over it again, having once done it . . . None of these things; the work hath not been huddled up in seventy-two days, but hath cost the workmen the pains of twice seven times seventy-two days, and more . . . Neither did we think much to consult the translators or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek,



or Latin; no, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see . . . The Scriptures then being acknowledged to be so full and so perfect, how can we excuse ourselves of negligence if we do not study them? of curiosity, if we be not content with them? Men talk much of *eireseione*,\* how many sweet and goodly things it had hanging on it; of the Philosopher's Stone, that it turneth copper into gold; of *Cornu-copiae*, that it had all things necessary for food in it; of *Panaces* the herb, that it was good for all diseases; of *Catholicon* the drug, that it is instead of all purges; of Vulcan's Armour, that it was an armour of proof against all thrusts and all blows, &c. Well, that which they falsely or vainly attributed to these things for bodily good, we may justly, and with full measure, ascribe unto the Scripture for spiritual. It is not only an armour, but also a whole armoury of weapons, both offensive and defensive, whereby we may save ourselves, and put the enemy to flight. It is not an herb, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit every month, and the fruit thereof is for meat, and the leaves for

\* An olive bough wrapped about with wool, whereon did hang figs, &c.

medicine. It is not a pot of manna, or a cruse of oil, which were for memory only, or for a meal's meat or two; but, as it were, a shower of heavenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it never so great; and, as it were, a whole cellar full of oil-vessels; whereby all our necessities may be provided for, and our debts discharged. In a word, it is a panary of wholesome food against fenowed† traditions; a physican's shop (St. Basil calleth it) of preservatives against poisoned heresies; a pandect of profitable laws against rebellious spirits; a treasury of most costly jewels against beggarly rudiments; finally, a fountain of most pure water springing up into everlasting life. And what marvel? the original thereof being from heaven, not from earth; the Author being God, not man; the inditer, the Holy Spirit, not the wit of the Apostles or Prophets; the penmen, such as were sanctified from the womb, and endued with a principal portion of God's Spirit; the matter, verity, piety, purity, uprightness; the form, God's Word, God's testimony, God's oracles, the Word of truth, the Word of salvation, etc.; the effects, light of understanding, stableness of persuasion, repentance from dead works, newness of life, holiness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost; lastly, the end and reward of the study thereof, fellowship with the saints, participation of the heavenly nature, fruition of an inheritance immortal, undefiled, and that never shall fade away. Happy is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrice happy that meditateth in it day and night . . .

† Mouldy.

It remaineth that we commend thee to God, and to the Spirit of His grace, which is able to build farther than we can ask or think. He removeth the scales from our eyes, the vail from our hearts, opening our wits that we may understand His Word, enlarging our hearts, yea correcting our affections, that we may love it above gold and silver, yea that we may love it to the end. O receive not so great things in vain: O despise not so great salvation."

No theological annotations are appended, and in their stead, in addition to textual notes, there are numerous marginal renderings. Many of the notes explain symbolic names like those in Hosea i., 2; and sometimes the Hebrew geographical name is put in the margin when another term has been put into the text: as Cush, Ethiopia; Aram, Mesopotamia; Ararat, Armenia. A Hebrew or foreign word, when retained in the text, is often explained in the margin: as Jasher, "of the upright," 2 Samuel i., 18; mammon, "riches," Luke xvi., 11; and, conversely, the original term "teraphin" is given in the margin, and "images" remaining in the text. Often the marginal renderings are preferable to those in the text. In Isaiah lxv., 11, they seem to have mistaken the meaning of *Gad* and *Meni* ("troop" and "number,") rendered in the Revised Version "Fortune" and "Destiny" respectively: see Gen. xxx., 11, and Ezekiel xliii., 15. Geographical notes are sometimes found: 2 Kings, xxiii., 13, "mount of corruption," margin, "that is, the mount of Olives;" 2 Chron. ix., 26,

"the river," margin, "that is, Euphrates;" Acts xxvii., 7, "Crete," margin, "or Candy." A few general notes are interspersed: Gen. vi., 5, margin, "The Hebrew word signifieth not only the imagination, but also the purposes and desires;" Exodus xxix., 13, on "caul," the margin is, "It seemeth by anatomy and the Hebrew doctors to be the midriff;" 2 Sam. xxiv., 1, "he made David to number," margin, "Satan;" Acts xvii., 19, "Areopagus," margin, "or Mars' hill. It was the highest court in Athens." Explanations of weights and measures, and of terms denoting distances, are also given, and though historical notes are appended to later editions, the translators are not responsible for them. Dr. Paris and Dr. Blaney made many additional annotations. The alternative renderings in the margin are very useful.

The Authorised Version has been examined by the most eminent critics and scholars in this and other countries, and all combine in testifying to its general faithfulness, and its matchless force and beauty. It is incomparably the best that has been produced. To praise it is almost as needless as "to paint the lily." It has elicited encomiums even from Roman Catholic divines. Geddes thus writes:—"The highest eulogiums have been pronounced on the translation of James I., both by our own writers and by foreigners; and indeed if accuracy, fidelity, and the strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute the qualities of an excellent version, this, of all versions, must in general be accounted the most excellent. Every

sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter and point seems to have been weighed with the nicest exactitude, and expressed, either in the text or margin, with the greatest precision." Still more remarkable is the testimony of a late distinguished pervert to Romanism, Dr. F. W. Faber:—"Who will say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear, like music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments; and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good, speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled."

Yet still our English Bible is a human work, and like everything human it has its blemishes. These we cannot particularise here; *substantially* it is the Word of God.

The primary source of imperfection is the text from which the translation has been made. The Hebrew text has comparatively few defects, the Jews preserving it with scrupulous care, and the Masorites being so thorough and conscien-

tious in their recension. But it is different with the "Textus Receptus" of the New Testament. Greek Biblical criticism has made rapid progress since the Authorised Version was issued, and through the labours of Lachman, Tischendorf, Tregelles and others, many interpolations and corruptions have been detected and removed. A few of these we may notice when we come to examine the Revised Version. Again, in our Version it often occurs that one Hebrew or Greek word when frequently repeated is translated by several English words; while, on the other hand, two or more Hebrew or Greek words, entirely distinct in sense, are represented by one English word. The translators seem to be conscious of this. "Another thing," says Dr. Smith, "we think good to admonish thee of, gentle reader, that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words." For example, in Romans iv., where *logizomai* is rendered "count," "impute," and "reckon," the force of the Apostle's reasoning is thereby greatly lost; in Psalm xxx. 3, and xvi. 10, where the same Hebrew word *sheol* is translated in the one place "grave," in the other "hell," whereas it means neither the one nor the other; in Matt. xxiii. 33, and Acts ii. 31, where two distinct Greek words *geennes* and *hadou* are rendered by one English word "hell." In Heb. x. 23, *elpis* is rendered "faith," and in Col. i. 15, *prototokos pases kliseos* is translated "the first-born of every creature," thus tending to obscure the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. The force of the Greek article is sometimes

overlooked, and many words and idioms occur which have either become obsolete, and therefore unintelligible, or indecent, and therefore obnoxious to people of refined taste. It has been well observed:—"By far the greater portion of desirable emendations in the English Bible consists in expressions unfit for public, and unnecessary for private use, which in no wise affect the sense of the text; and which, therefore, may be altered, not only with impunity, but even with advantage." These, and other defects such as variations in spelling and in tenses of verbs, are to a great extent remedied in the Revised Version. Light, come from what quarter it may, should be hailed, and any attempt to make the Word of God more clear and to bring it into harmony with the original should be thankfully accepted. "If," says Bishop Ellicott, "we are truly and heartily persuaded that there are errors and inaccuracies in our Version, if we know that by far the best and most faithful translation the world has ever seen still shares the imperfection that belongs to every human work—however noble and exalted, if we feel and know that these imperfections are no less patent than remediable, then surely it is our duty to Him who gave that blessed Word for the guidance of man, through evil report and through good report, to labour by gentle counsels to supply what is lacking, and correct what is amiss, to render what has been blessed with great measures of perfection yet more perfect, and to hand it down thus marked with our reverential love and solicitude as the best and

most blessed heritage we have to leave to them who shall follow us." The task of revision is a difficult one. The Authorised Version has stood the test of centuries, has nourished the hopes and aspirations of countless numbers of our fellow-men, and no rude handling of it would be tolerated. The history of the English Bible is the history of Protestantism, and every Protestant has an interest in it, and claims it as his rightful heritage. Our Bible is, in short, the patrimony of the whole English people; and as Dean Alford has said, "No new rendering is safe until it has gone through many brains, and been thoroughly sifted by differing perceptions and taste." It must, indeed, be the embodiment of the nation's thoughts and feelings, unbiassed by any creed or party.

Before entering on our study of the Revised Version and concluding our summary of the Authorised, we desire to record Principal Fairbairn's recent panegyric:—

"Simply as a piece of literature, it (the Bible) is the most marvellous thing in the world! You call it a book, but it stands there a literature—the creation of from twelve to fifteen hundred years, in fragments, some small, others larger, each fragment reflecting its own age, the earliest being most dissimilar and strange to the latest; yet with all its distance, and all its variety, this Book stands so near to us that it is to our spirits of all the books the nearest in the world. It contains from the literary point of view, the most remarkable code of ancient times. It contains the quaintest, most beautiful, and



graphic history. It contains the supreme devotional literature of the world, the literature that men in their highest moment of religious transport or of pious meditation have used to express thoughts too deep for tears. It contains poetry that, simply as poetry, stands foremost in its own order, full of a great sense of mystery; full of an awful sense of suffering; pierced and transformed by a glorious sense of God. It possesses more than all a conception of God and an idea of man, without a parallel in the literature and religions of the ancient world. That Book is the noblest heirloom of humanity. To every man it belongs as an inalienable birthright. To its best truths, to its inmost heart, to its meaning for this and all times, you have all an indefeasible right. The worst of frauds were the act of the man who would cheat you out of it."

Verily, there is no book on which we can rest at the hour of death but the Bible. And the grand secret of the study of the Scriptures is, to discover Jesus Christ therein, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In the words of Thomas à Kempis, "Look in the Holy Scriptures for truth, not for eloquence; and read them with that mind wherewith they were written, for thine everlasting profit, and not for a polished phrase."





## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE REVISED VERSION.

#### I.—THE NEW TESTAMENT, 1881.

SINCE 1611 no important, or at any rate no recorded change has taken place in translating or revising the Word of God. The present century, however, has seen the origin of the latest revision of the New Testament in 1881, and of the Old in 1885.

Owing to foreign explorations and educational development, Biblical criticism has of late years been much in vogue, especially since the discovery of the Sinaitic MS. by Tischendorf, in 1851. This discovery may be said to have been the precursor to the first practical step taken in this work of 1881, through the publication in March, 1857, of a Revision of St. John's Gospel by "Five Clergymen," of whom one was the late Dean Alford, who put forth in 1869 his complete Revision of the whole of the New Testament. This work, as we see from its preface, led on to the Version under consideration. The objects of its publication, he tells us, are mainly these, viz., (1), To keep open the great question of an authoritative revision; (2), To show the absolute necessity of such a measure sooner or later; (3), To disabuse men's minds of the fallacies by which the Authorised Version is commonly defended. After disposing of the objections which are urged against attempts to revise the accepted Version of Holy Writ, the writer concludes his preface in these words:—

"The Reviser has only to express his wish and prayer that this work may, as soon as possible, be rendered useless by the more matured and multifarious labour of a Royal Commission. Such a Commission he believes the various sections of the Church in this realm fully able to furnish with members; and he doubts not that its issue would be a new authorised version, founded upon the old, but everywhere, by its own weight of excellence, superseding it."

With such a project the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol sympathised, and after many conferences with Dean Alford, Bishop Ellicott communicated his views to the late Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Wilberforce, who resolved to bring the matter before the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury.

Though the assent of the Convocation of York was not formally asked, and though in the north some difference of opinion was expressed, yet both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury arrived at the following conclusions contained in a report which was read to the Lower House of Convocation on May 5th, 1870:—

"1. That it is desirable that a revision of the Authorised Version of the Holy Scriptures be undertaken.

"2. That the revision be so conducted as to comprise both marginal renderings, and such emendations as it may be found necessary to insert in the text of the Authorised Version.

"3. That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except where, in

the judgment of the most competent scholars, such change is necessary.

"4. That in such necessary changes the style of the language employed in the existing Version be closely followed.

"5. That it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong."

Accordingly, a Committee of eight members from each House was appointed by both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury, who, having invited scholars of different religious bodies to join them, and having drawn up some rules for their guidance, addressed themselves in June, 1870, to the important task of revising both the Old and New Testaments. An invitation to co-operate with the English Companies in the work of revision was addressed to American scholars, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, and cordially accepted. The Committee of the great Western Empire began active work in October, 1872.

The mode of operation adopted by both these learned companies was as follows:—

"1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorised Version consistently with faithfulness.

"2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorised and earlier English Versions.

"3. Each company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the

second time finally, and on principles of voting as hereinafter is provided.

"4. That the text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and that when the text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorised Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.

5. "To make or retain no change in the text on the second final revision by each company, except *two-thirds* of those present approve of the same, but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.

"6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice of the next meeting.

"7. To revise the headings of chapters, pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.

"8. To refer, on the part of each company, when considered desirable, to divines, scholars, and literary men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions."

We have, therefore, thought it necessary to detail the causes that led up to the revision of 1881, as well as the mode and rules of procedure adopted by the Committee. But in a work of this kind it cannot be expected (and, indeed, it were only puzzling to the ordinary reader) that we should give at any length the various readings of this the most modern revision, and contrast them with the Authorised Version of 1611. Suffice it to say that the

passage of "the three heavenly witnesses" (1 John v. 7) has been expunged, whereas the latter part, wrongly italicised in the Authorised Version, of 1 John ii. 23, has been altered merely verbally and retained. Again, the doxology in the Lord's Prayer, according to Matthew, has been omitted though found in the four Syriac Versions, the Thebaic, Gothic, and Armenian, and in Chrysostom. The passage of the woman taken in adultery (John vii. 53—viii. 11) is inserted in the text, but enclosed in square brackets, and the conclusion of St. Mark's Gospel (Mark xvi. 9-20), while admitted to the same place, has attention called to the difficulties attending its reception. Some verses are removed from the text, *e.g.*, those containing the descent of the angels into the pool (John v. 3, 4); the prophecy of the parting of the garments of our Lord (Matt. xxvii. 35) at the time of the Crucifixion; the notification by St. Mark (Mark xv. 28) of the fulfilment of prophecy; the rebuke to the disciples (Luke ix. 55) when they desired to bring fire on the Samaritan village; the statement to the Ethiopian treasurer (Acts viii. 37) of the necessity of faith before baptism; and the liberty of Christians (Rom. xiv. 6) not to observe certain days; and in 2 Tim. ii. 26, we find *ezogremenoî k. t. a.*, rendered "having been taken captive by the Lord's servant unto the will of God"—where neither "Lord" nor "God" appear in the original Greek. The marginal note appended in the Revised Version by no means explains the use of different Greek pronouns which are both translated "him" in

the Authorised Version. It were a pity that the force of the demonstrative pronoun (*ekeinos*) were not fully recognised someway thus—"By means of the latter unto the will of the former."

Many obsolete words and phrases are removed. For example, "*By and by*," in the sense of *immediately* (Matt. xiii. 21); "*by*," in the sense of *against* (1 Cor. iv. 4); "*sometime*," and "*sometimes*," in the sense of *formerly* (Eph. ii. 13); "*prevent*," in the sense of *precede* (Matt. xvii. 25); "*usury*," in the sense of *interest* (Matt. xxv. 27); "*rooms*," in the sense, not of "apartments," but of *seats* in an apartment (Mark xii. 39); "*coasts*," in the sense of *borders* (Matt. ii. 16); "*offend*," and "*offences*," in the sense of *cause to stumble* and *occasions of stumbling* (Matt. v. 29, 30; Luke xviii. 1); "*thought*," in the sense of *anxiety* (Matt. vi. 25); "*able*," in the sense not of *skilful* or *powerful*, but of *sufficient* (2 Cor. iii. 5, 6).

We note the following translations in the Revised Version, the context readily occurring to the reader.

1. Make to themselves friends "by means of the mammon of unrighteousness."
2. "The love of money is *a* root of all deeds of evil."
3. "To *an* unknown God."
4. (Judas Iscariot) "He was a thief and having the bag, took away what was put therein."
5. "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us." "And Jesus said unto him, if thou canst! All things are possible to him that believeth."

6. "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian." "I would to God that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds."

7. "Much learning doth turn thee to madness."

8. "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet."

9. "One flock, one Shepherd." There is a different Greek word for "fold" and "flock." Protestants recognise one "flock" but many "folds."

10. "A repentance which causeth no regret."

11. "Against thy holy servant Jesus."

12. "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house."

13. "*This he said*, making all meats clean."

14. "The boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem."

15. "Supposing that godliness is gain."

The alterations introduced into the Lord's Prayer have provoked much comment. The Revised Version substitutes "have forgiven" for "forgive;" "bring" for "lead," and "the evil one" (thus limiting the sense) for "evil."

In 1 Cor. xiii. "love" is substituted for "charity;" and in Acts ii. 27, and Rev. i. 18, "Hades" for "hell." In the Apocalypse the distinction is observed between "the beast" (*therion*) and "the living creatures" (*zoa*). The Version has also endeavoured to give English equivalents for such difficult words as *exousia*, *dunamis*, *ischus*, *kratos*, and *arche*. We give an example of each word: John i. 12, "the right to become," not "power;" Mark v. 30, "the power



proceeding from him," not "virtue;" 2 Thess. i. 9, "the glory of his might," not "power;" Col. i. 11, "the might of his glory," not "his glorious power;" Jude 6, "angels which kept not their principality," not "first estate." They also discriminate between the Greek words for "see," and where the English idiom admits, a distinction is established between *eimi* and *ginomai*. Marked attention is also paid to the force of the Greek article, the *aorist* (indefinite past) and different moods and tenses of the Greek verb. In some cases, however, the English is sacrificed to the Greek, as John xvii. 24, "that which thou hast given me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with me;" and Rev. xi. 17, "We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and which wast, because thou *hast* taken thy great power, and *didst* reign;" and 1 Peter ii. 7, "for you which believe is the preciousness" is awkwardly translated.

It has been calculated that the number of textual changes amount in all to over five thousand—about three thousand in the historical books, and two thousand in the Epistles and Revelation. Of these five thousand changes, probably one-half will affect the English translation. The vital doctrines of Christianity, however, are in no wise affected.

Thus far do we purpose leading our readers through the intricacies of the maze of modern criticism involved in the minute changes of the text. It were a pity that instead of transposing words as "Is it I, Lord?" for "Lord, is it I?" and "on the morrow" for "the next day," and

making other alterations which savour of pedantry than of exalted taste and spiritual research, as "him unto Jesus" for "him to Jesus," the Revisers of 1881 did not adhere as closely as possible to the Old Version, and put many of their renderings in the margin which are placed in the text. In the New Version one is struck with the terseness and matter-of-fact style in which the composition is rendered. The business spirit of the age may perhaps account for this; but methinks the soft, full, melodious flow of language, so calculated to re-echo upon the nerve strings of the inner man, which is found throughout the Authorised Version, will ever uphold to the end of time that honour of our Lord which the Reviewers of 1881 have taken away from His Prayer, without in any way accounting for it. Had they adopted this course and several suggestions of the American Committee, their scientific knowledge of grammar had been an aid rather than an impediment, and we would have had another dignified vehicle afforded us for moulding our thoughts and having the great truths of Revelation publicly developed. As it is the revision of 1881 can only be regarded as a handmaiden on the study-table to aid the devotion of the scholar or the research of the preacher. Consequently, after all the chief use of the present attempt will be as a work of reference in which the grammatical niceties of the New Testament diction are treated with laboured fidelity that accords rather with the smile of the professor than the soul of the descendants of our ancestors.

## II.—THE OLD TESTAMENT, 1885.

AFTER fifteen years of labour, a great work has been completed. On the 15th of May a copy of the Revised Bible was presented to the Queen by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was a handsomely-bound copy of the standard edition, in five volumes, of pica, royal octavo size, contained in a morocco case, and bearing on the first volume the inscription:—

“Presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. May 15, MDCCCLXXXV.”

The work is the property of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and whatever be the final verdict pronounced upon it by those most competent to judge, all will cordially endorse the resolution passed by Convocation on the 30th of April:—

“That this House presents its hearty thanks to the learned Revisers of the Authorised Version of the Old Testament, for the unwearied labour and singular diligence which they have expended during many years in carrying out the weighty task intrusted to them by Convocation. They desire to express their great gratitude to Almighty God for permitting so important a work to have been executed at this time, and they pray that it may be blessed by Him to the increase of the knowledge of His Holy Word by His people.”

In the preface the Revisers say they have borne in mind that it was their duty not to make a new translation, but to revise one already existing, which for more than two centuries

and a-half had held the position of an English classic. They have, therefore, departed from the Authorised Version only in cases where they disagreed with the translation of 1611 as to the meaning or construction of a word or sentence; or where it was necessary, for the sake of uniformity, to render such parallel passages as were identical in Hebrew by the same English words, so that an English reader might know at once, by comparison, that a difference in the translation corresponded to a difference in the original; or where the language of the Authorised Version was liable to be misunderstood by reason of its being archaic or obscure; or finally, where the rendering of an earlier English version seemed preferable, or where, by an apparently slight change, it was possible to bring out more fully the meaning of a passage of which the translation was already substantially accurate.

It has been thought advisable, in regard to the word "Jehovah," to follow the usage of the Authorised Version, and not to insert it uniformly in place of "Lord" or "God," which when printed in small capitals represent the words substituted by Jewish custom for the ineffable Name according to the vowel points by which it is distinguished. It will be found, therefore, that in this respect the Authorised Version has been departed from only in a few passages, in which the introduction of a proper name seemed to be required.

Terms of natural history have been changed only where it was certain that the Authorised

Version was incorrect, and where there was sufficient evidence for the substituted rendering. In cases of doubt the alternative rendering has been given in the margin, and even where no doubt existed, but where there was no familiar English equivalent for the original word, the Old Version has been allowed to remain,\* and the more accurate term has been placed in the margin.

In some words of very frequent occurrence—the Authorised Version being either inadequate or inconsistent, and sometimes misleading—changes have been introduced with as much uniformity as appeared practicable or desirable. For instance, “the tabernacle of the congregation” has been everywhere changed to “the tent of meeting,” on account of Exodus xxv., 22; xxix., 42, 43; and also because “the tabernacle of *the* congregation” conveys an entirely wrong sense. The words “tabernacle” and “tent,” as the renderings of two different Hebrew words, are, in the Authorised Version, frequently interchanged in such a manner as to lead to confusion, and the Revisers have endeavoured throughout the Pentateuch to preserve a consistent distinction between them. Their practice in regard to the words “assembly” and “congregation” has been the same in principle, although they have contented themselves with introducing greater consistency of rendering without aiming at absolute uniformity. In consequence of the changes which have taken

\* As, for instance, “coney” (Lev. xi. 5), “fitches” (Isa. xxviii. 25), “gourd” (Jonah iv. 6).

place in the English language, the term "meat offering" has become inappropriate to describe an offering of which flesh was no part, and by the alteration to "meal offering" a sufficiently accurate representation of the original has been obtained with the least possible change of form.

As regards the use of words, it has been found needful to deviate from the language of the Authorised Version in only a few cases. One of these deviations is the use of "peoples" instead of "people," as for instance in Ps. lxxvii., 5. Again, the Hebrew word *goyim*, "nations," is much more sparingly employed in the sense of "heathen" or "Gentiles." Similarly, the Hebrew *Sheol*, which signifies the abode of departed spirits, and corresponds to the Greek Hades, or the under world, is variously rendered in the Authorised Version by "grave," "pit," and "hell." The Revisers observe that, of these renderings, "hell," if it could be taken in its original sense in the Creeds, would be a fairly adequate equivalent for the Hebrew word; but it is so commonly understood as of the place of torment, that to employ it frequently would lead to misunderstanding. In the historical narratives, therefore, they have left the rendering "the grave" or "the pit" in the text, with a marginal note, "Heb. *Sheol*," to indicate that it does not signify "the place of burial," while in the poetical writings they have put most commonly "*Sheol*" in the text, and "the grave" in the margin. In Isaiah xiv., however, where "hell" is used in more of its original sense, and is less liable to be misunderstood, the Revisers have

contented themselves with leaving "hell" in the text, and have connected it with other passages by putting "Sheol" in the margin. The Hebrew word *Asherah*, which is uniformly and wrongly rendered "grove" in the Authorised Version, most probably denotes the wooden symbol of a goddess, and the Revisers, therefore, have not hesitated to introduce it as a proper name.

In regard to language, the Revisers have not deemed it part of their duty to reduce the Authorised Version to conformity with modern usage, and have therefore left untouched all archaisms, whether of language or construction, which, though not in familiar use, cause a reader no embarrassment and lead to no misunderstanding. The principle which has guided them in this matter is that where an archaic word or expression was liable to be misunderstood, or at least was not perfectly intelligible, they have substituted for it another in equally good use at the time the Authorised Version was made, and expressing all that the archaism was intended to convey, but more familiar to the modern reader. Thus the verb "to ear," in the sense of "to plough" was reluctantly abandoned, because it was ascertained that the meaning was unknown to many persons of good intelligence, but the word "bolled" (Ex. ix. 31), which signifies "podded for seed," and is known in provincial dialects, has no synonym in literary English, and to have discarded it in favour of a less accurate or more paraphrastic expression would have been to impoverish the language. One of the few in-

stances in which the language of the Authorised Version has been modified in accordance with later usage, is the change of the neuter possessive pronoun from "his" to "its." It was found necessary in some cases to substitute "its" for "his," in order to avoid obscurity, and there seemed no good reason, when it was once introduced, for refusing to admit it generally when it referred to purely inanimate objects.

The old division of the books into chapters and verses, it is further notified, has been abandoned in favour of paragraphs, the numbering of the chapters and verses being, however, retained for convenience of reference. One consequence of this has been the omission of the headings of chapters, which, for other and more important reasons, it was thought advisable to abandon, as involving questions which belong rather to the province of the commentator than to that of the translator. The head-lines of pages have disappeared for the same reason.

The most striking, and, on the whole, happy innovation is the printing of poetical passages in poetical form. Not only has this been done in the poetical books—Psalms, Proverbs, Job, and Canticles—but wherever poetical passages occur. Thus the songs of Lamech (Gen. iv. 23), Jacob, Moses, Deborah, and Hannah, the Psalms of Jonah and Habakkuk, David's Lament (2 Sam. 1), and even such slight snatches of song as—

"Saul has slain his thousands,  
And David his tens of thousands,"

appear as verse, and thereby heighten the effect.



The much controverted passage of Joshua commanding the sun to stand still also assumes a poetical form, which now renders it of easy explanation, the miraculous being eliminated:—

“And he said in the sight of Israel,  
Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;  
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon.  
And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,  
Until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies.”

So, too, the ballad origin of the famous jawbone brandished by Samson (Judges xv. 16):—

“With the jawbone of an ass, an heap, two heaps,  
With the jawbone of an ass have I smitten a thousand men.”

In the use of italics the Revisers adopted as their rule “that all such words now printed in italics as are plainly implied in the Hebrew, and necessary in English, be printed in common type.” But where any doubt existed as to the exact rendering of the Hebrew, all words which have been added to give completeness to the English expression are printed in italic type, so that the reader, by omitting them, may be able to see how far their insertion is justified by the words of the original.

The marginal notes consist of (1), Renderings of such variations in the Massoretic text as appeared to be of sufficient importance; (2), Alternative readings introduced by “Or;” (3), Literal renderings of the Hebrew or Aramaic; (4), Changes of text made on the authority of the ancient Versions; (5), Readings from ancient Versions which appeared to be of sufficient

importance to be noticed; (6) Renderings of the Hebrew consonants as read with different vowel points, or as differently divided; (7), References to parallel or related passages; and (8), Explanations of certain proper names.

With regard to Proper Names, the Revisers say that they have endeavoured to ascertain the system of translation adopted by the translators of the Authorised Version, and to carry it out with somewhat greater consistency. They have not, however, attempted anything like rigid uniformity, and have left unchanged all those names which by usage have become English, as for instance, Moses, Aaron, Isaac, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the like.

We can indicate here only a few of the changes introduced into the text. In Gen. i. 2, the new reading is, "And the earth was waste and void;" ver. 5, "And there was evening and there was morning, one day;" in vi. 4, we have, "The nephelim were in the earth in those days;" in iii. 5, "God," instead of "gods;" 17, "in toil" for "in sorrow;" also, in chap. xlix. 4, the Revised Version reads, "Unstable as water, have not thou the excellency;" in Exod. xx. 13, "Thou shalt not kill" becomes "Thou shalt do no murder;" Job xxxi. 35, "Oh . . . that mine adversary had written a book" becomes "Oh . . . that I had the indictment which my adversary had written;" Psalm viii. 5, "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels" we have in the Revised Version "For thou hast made him a little lower than God;" Psalm cxvi. 11, "I said in my haste, All men are liars" is

changed to "I said when I made haste to escape, All men are a lie;" Eccles. xii. 13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, &c.," we have "This is the end of the matter: all hath been heard, fear God, &c.;" in Eccles. xii. 1, "Remember also," is put for "Remember now;" and "vanity and vexation of spirit" (Eccles. ii. 17) has become "vanity and a striving after wind" (*haschen nach Wind*); and "happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them" (Psalm cxxvii. 5) has been unnecessarily changed into "happy is the man that hath filled his quiver with them;" in the "Song of songs" ii. 3, "as the apple tree" the *tappuach* in the original is a "citron" or "orange" tree; also, in Canticles vi. 13, "as the company of *two armies*" is more properly rendered "as upon the *dance* of Mahanaim," which the Revisers give us—a dance which the best commentators explain as a sort of contre-danse. For "the veil" in Ruth iii. 15, we have "mantle" substituted. In Isaiah xxiv. 15, instead of "glorify ye the Lord in the fires," we have "glorify ye the Lord in the east;" and "the desire of all nations" (Haggai ii. 7) now appears as "the desirable things of all nations."

Many household words, however, remain intact, for which we are grateful to the Revisers; as, for instance, "a land flowing with milk and honey," "a still small voice," "a tale that is told," "balm in Gilead," "house appointed for all living," "darkness which may be felt," "pen of a ready writer," "vanity of vanities," "law of the Medes and Persians," "man of unclean lips," "precept upon precept," "a lamp unto my feet,"

"wife of thy bosom," "apple of the eye," "cast thy bread upon the waters," "put not thy trust in princes," "go to the ant, thou sluggard," "jealousy is cruel as the grave," "black, but comely," "sick of love," "a wise son maketh a glad father," "righteousness exalteth a nation," "the race is not to the swift," "iron sharpeneth iron," "the name of the Lørd is a strong tower," "a crown of glory," "a diadem of beauty," "as a tender plant," "love is strong as death."

It is impossible to forecast the fate of the Revised Version. We venture, however, to think that it will not supersede the Authorised—at all events not in our day. It will, doubtless, impart a fresh stimulus to the study of the Word of God, and remain a monument of learning and piety *aere perennius* more enduring than brass. But a Version, which has moulded our language, literature, and theology; which has permeated the national life, and become an integral part of it; venerated, too, as is the Version of 1611 by the English-speaking race—a translation, whose noble sentiments, pointed proverbs, and felicitous expressions are on every lip; whose verses have been recited on bleak moors and in lonely glens, on mountain tops and in deep mines, in barns and cottages, in lordly halls and palaces; which has nerved the weak, reclaimed the abandoned, healed the broken-hearted, inspired the dying, and erst gave martyrs an unquenchable hope of immortality as they chanted its Psalms amid scorching flames—such a Version is not readily discarded, but grows in favour as years roll on, and is, in truth, a "joy for ever."

The symbol of Britain's greatness is the unsealed Book. And if ever she should close that Book, proscribe its publication, retard its progress, or fail to acknowledge, uphold, and cherish it, that very moment, as a nation, she is shorn of her strength and nobility, and, as individuals, we are worthless. May that day never dawn! On the contrary, may there always exist a national recognition of religion, and may the influence of the Bible be unimpeded and universal as the light, filling the earth with joy and gladness! *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. He is our light and salvation.* Be it our's, then, to walk in the light, to esteem our great privileges, gird the loins of our minds, and do our utmost to unfold to others the Gospel's precious truths, which are free alike to all, as the air of heaven, the sunshine and the love of God; and thus, each in his own sphere, by work and character, poor at best though these may be, help, by the blessing from on high, to hasten on that—

“far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves.”



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